■ LIFESTYLE / D1

Nedy Tantoco's list: 10 things men should know about women and shopping

■ NEWS/ A2

Reds rule out Christmas truce

■ WORLD / A8

Bush authorized secret eavesdropping in US, says intel official

■ ENTERTAINMENT / A4-1

Mike Enriquez: Let's face it, I don't have a face for TV but...

Flashing lights may be fun, but flashing Santa is not

I HAVE A GIFT FOR YOU!
AY, CANDY CANE!
AY, CHESTNUTS!

LONDON—BRITISH POLICE said Friday they were on the lookout for a man dressed as Father Christmas, a serial flasher exposing himself around a small town on England's south coast.

The man has indecently

FLASHING/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Doctor of champions makes it to Winter Games

By Christian V. Esguerra

CAMARA

A FILIPINO CHIROPRACTOR has been named to the elite 12-man international delegation in charge of the physical conditioning of athletes in the 20th Winter Olympic

DOCTOR / A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
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Gov't to Meralco: Pay up

'Power play' may leave energy chief powerless

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A POWER PLAY IS BREWING AT THE Department of Energy.

A top Malacañang source said Energy Undersecretary Peter Anthony Abaya has been pushing for the creation of the Strategic Oil, Gas, Energy Resources and Power Infrastructure Office which would take over practically all the functions of his boss, the low-key Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla, except for the monitoring of oil prices.

The source, who asked that his name be withheld on grounds that he wanted to avoid personality clashes within the Cabinet, claimed Abaya was the proponent of Executive Order No. 474 creating the power infrastructure body.

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed the EO on Nov. 30. The new body has not been fully constituted.

In a text message to the INQUIRER last night, Abaya admitted having "discussed" the formation of the body with Ms Arroyo a few months ago but denied he had authored the EO, saying he did not know who was behind it.

Abaya also said he did know who would head the body.

The source found the new body a needless addition to the bureaucracy because the DOE, on its own, he said, could do the job better.

POWER/ A6

RP on verge of biggest real estate boom in 30 years

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES IS ON THE CUSP OF what could be the country's biggest property boom in nearly three decades fueled by money from overseas Filipinos, investments from businessmen and increased government spending.

But Albay Rep. Joey Salceda said the real estate industry could only reach its full potential if President Macapagal-Arroyo resolves her biggest political crisis triggered by allegations that she cheated in the 2004 elections.

"If politics is neutral, we are at the threshold of the biggest real estate boom since 1997," Salceda said in an interview.

RP ON VERGE/ A6

CELEBRATING THE FILIPINO. On Saturday, the lights on a giant Christmas tree are switched on at Rizal Park with fireworks galore. Made of indigenous materials, the tree dazzles as the "Pamaskong Galing Pilipino" so aptly dubbed in this season of endless wonder: That the Filipino has within himself the skills, the industry, creativity, the powers of mind and heart to dazzle the world.

ERIK ARAZAS

GMA, Lopez clan may clash over P42-B debt to Napocor

By Tony S. Bergonia

ENERGY CONSUMERS WILL be looking at a considerable reduction in electricity rates if the Arroyo administration opts to convert a P42-billion outstanding debt of the Manila Electric Co. into shares of stock, resulting in government virtually taking control of the Lopez Group-led distribution utility.

This was one of the options presented in a July 2005 memorandum to President Macapagal-Arroyo by a top Malacañang official to settle a long-standing dispute between the National Power Corp. and Meralco over P42 billion worth of power that Meralco contracted to buy from the state-owned power generator.

The takeover option would have the government simply converting the P42 billion into equity by entering into a debt conversion agreement with Meralco.

Sources in Malacañang said the President herself wants the P42 billion collected from Meralco.

They said Napocor has been given the go-signal by the President to collect the P42 billion and prevent the further financial hemorrhage of the state-owned power firm.

According to the memorandum, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER and which was marked privileged and confidential, the government could use the P42-billion debt as leverage to bring down electricity costs by using the debt to acquire more shares in Meralco.

Industry insiders said, however, that even if this course of action would mean lower electricity rates and put a stop to the financial hemorrhage of Napocor, the government's hands were tied as it would put the Arroyo administration on a collision course with the powerful and politically influential Lopez family and send a wrong signal to investors.

Elpi Cuna, the Meralco spokesperson, said the dispute over the P42-billion debt

GOV'T/ A6

Senate rejects ConCom report: It's so Marcos

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Philip C. Tubeza

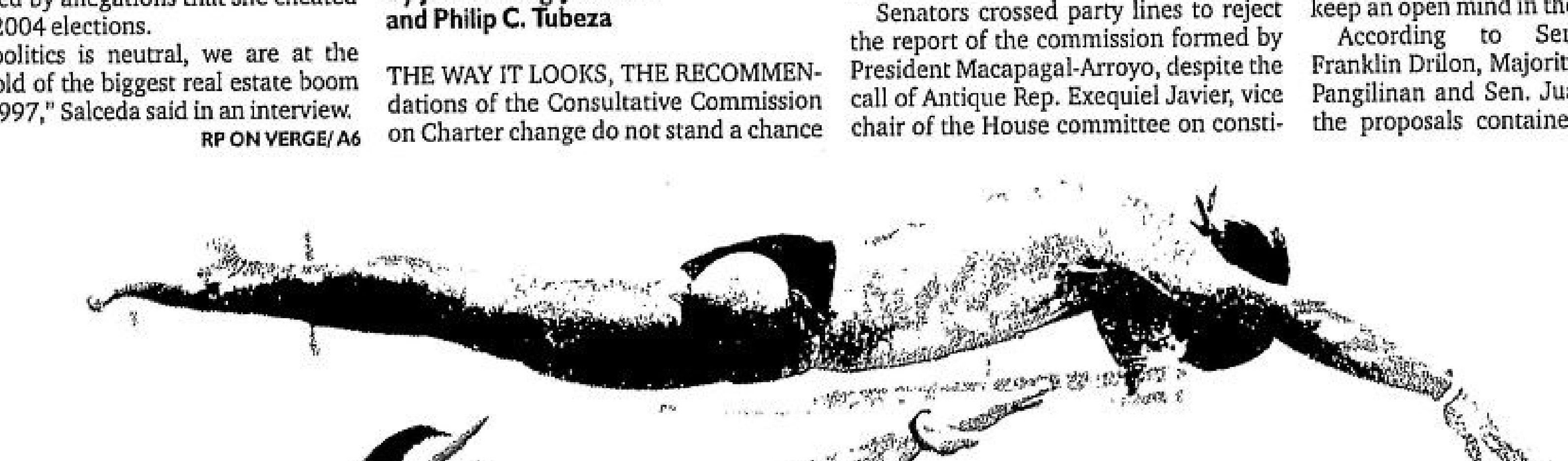
THE WAY IT LOOKS, THE RECOMMENDATIONS of the Consultative Commission on Charter change do not stand a chance in the Senate.

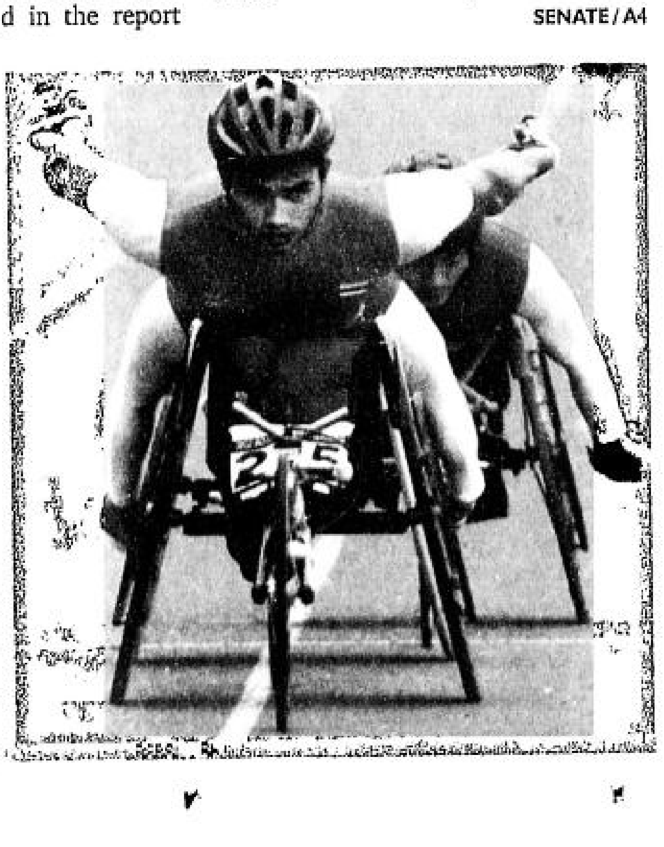
Senators crossed party lines to reject the report of the commission formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo, despite the call of Antique Rep. Exequiel Javier, vice chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, for the Senate to keep an open mind in the matter.

According to Senate President Franklin Drilon, Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, the proposals contained in the report would not be acceptable to those who would benefit from them, or to the people at large.

"The move is dead, deader, deadest," quipped Sen. Joker Arroyo.

SENATE / A4





JUST-DO-IT MOMENTS AT THE 3RD ASEAN PARA GAMES
(Above) Noel Gonzales bags a bronze in the 100m breaststroke. (Left) Blind ex-ramp model Gerry Gonzalo gets set to hurl the javelin but fails in his quest for a medal. (Right) The gold in the 1,500-meter wheelchair race is won by Thailand's Prawat Wathoram with two others practically breathing down his neck. *(Story on Page A22.)*

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO/RYAN LIM

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Palawan will experience rains and gusty winds with moderate to rough seas. Southern Luzon and the rest of Visayas will have occasional to frequent rains. The rest of the country will be mostly cloudy with scattered isolated rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY CHONA GALANG, PDI RESEARCH/12/18/05 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Occasional to frequent rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains		
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Occasional to fre-	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONTPAGE

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Reds rule out Christmas truce

By Blanche S. Rivera

HONG KONG—THERE WILL BE NO HOLIDAY truce between the New People's Army and the Armed Forces of the Philippines this year, not even in the spirit of Christmas.

A leader of the leftist umbrella organization, National Democratic Front of the Philippines, said the NPA had no intention of putting off any tactical offensives even if the AFP were to unilaterally declare a ceasefire, an action which military officials in Manila said they were also loathe to take.

Indignant over the killing of two more Bayan Muna supporters last Friday, NDFP spokesperson Luis Jalandoni said the AFP had lost its credibility in the wake of the recent spate of political killings.

"They are very lacking in credibility," Jalandoni told the INQUIRER in an interview. "The statements of the military are very bellicose and completely contrary to any kind of meaningful ceasefire. They are attacking the civilian population."

Jalandoni, who is based in the Netherlands, is in Hong Kong to support mass actions by the International League of People's Struggle against the World Trade Organization's sixth ministerial conference, which runs until today.

"It looks like the NPA would not declare a ceasefire because the AFP continues to attack activists in the legal and democratic arena. These people do not have arms," he said.

Barangay leaders Victorina Gomez, Romeo Atienza and Rey Macabali of Mexico, Pampanga, were ambushed Friday night. Gomez and Atienza were killed while Macabali remains in the hospital, according to reports reaching Jalandoni *(See related story on page A17)*.

Jalandoni said the "hostile actions" of the Arroyo government included the promotion of military officers whom the NDF and its allies blamed for the killings. Jalandoni was apparently referring to the recent promotion of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr., whom militants blamed for the deaths of many of their comrades.

Jalandoni also cited the Department of Justice's resolution identifying NDFP chair Jose Ma. Sison, who is in exile in The Hague, as one of those responsible for the death of Rodolfo Aguinaldo.

"These all make the atmosphere very unfavorable for a ceasefire," Jalandoni said.

The last time there was no Christmas truce in what is one of the world's longest insurgencies was in 2000, when then President Joseph Estrada suspended the peace talks and ordered an all-out war against the rebels.

"With 110 political killings under Arroyo in the last 10 months, it means there are more than three who die every week, or almost every other day," Jalandoni said.

Meanwhile, in Manila, AFP Deputy Chief Lt. Gen. Samuel Bagasin said the military had recommended that there be no truce. He added, however, that the military would honor a brief ceasefire of 24 to 48 hours if the country's political leadership were to call for it.

Palace officials as well as the military top brass indicated last month that they were not inclined to call a ceasefire this year because the NPA had been quite aggressive lately.

Last Friday, rebels killed three soldiers, including a major and a lieutenant, and wounded at least seven others in an ambush on a military convoy in Tulunan, North Cotabato. It was the latest in a series of NPA offensives to which the military has responded with its own counter-attacks.

"If you ask us, we want to continue with our pursuit operations," Bagasin said.

He claimed that the military's operations had produced a "reversal of trend," such that the rebels were now on the defensive. *With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

HK cops, WTO protesters clash

HONG KONG—POLICE HERE ON Saturday used tear gas, fire hoses and pepper spray to hold back hundreds of demonstrators, in the most violent protests since global trade talks began five days ago in the city.

Demonstrators from South Korea and other parts of Asia and the West, determined to disrupt the World Trade Organization meeting as it draws near its end, used metal railings as battering rams to try to smash through police lines.

Some broke through and attacked officers with bamboo sticks and bars. In chaotic scenes, police grappled with protesters and dragged some away.

An AFP correspondent said police had fired or thrown dozens of tear gas canisters Saturday evening.

"The protesters have been pushed back with tear smoke by the Hong Kong police. You're all perfectly okay," Peter Hunt, a police officer, told delegates inside the harbor-front convention center which had locked its doors.

Police chief Lee Ming-kwai said 41 people including five police had been injured. Two of the injured were in hospital.

No Filipinos were reported among the hurt or arrested.

Lee told reporters 900 protesters had been temporarily detained but there were no immediate figures for any arrests.

Chanting "Down, Down, WTO" in at least five languages, the protesters made their way past police barricades and a curious Chinese public to the Wan Chai Convention Center, where trade ministers of 149 nations were making a last-ditch effort to rescue a global pact on free trade.

Economist Walden Bello of the network Our World Is Not for Sale, said the WTO's sixth Ministerial Conference text as it was drafted would spell the death of poor countries.

A draft of the organization's final declaration, released after negotiators worked through the night in a private "green room," showed there was still no agreement on setting a date for ending farm export subsidies.

The European Union has balked at fixing a date because, it said, the United States, Australia, Canada and New Zealand must agree to reforms in their farm export systems first.

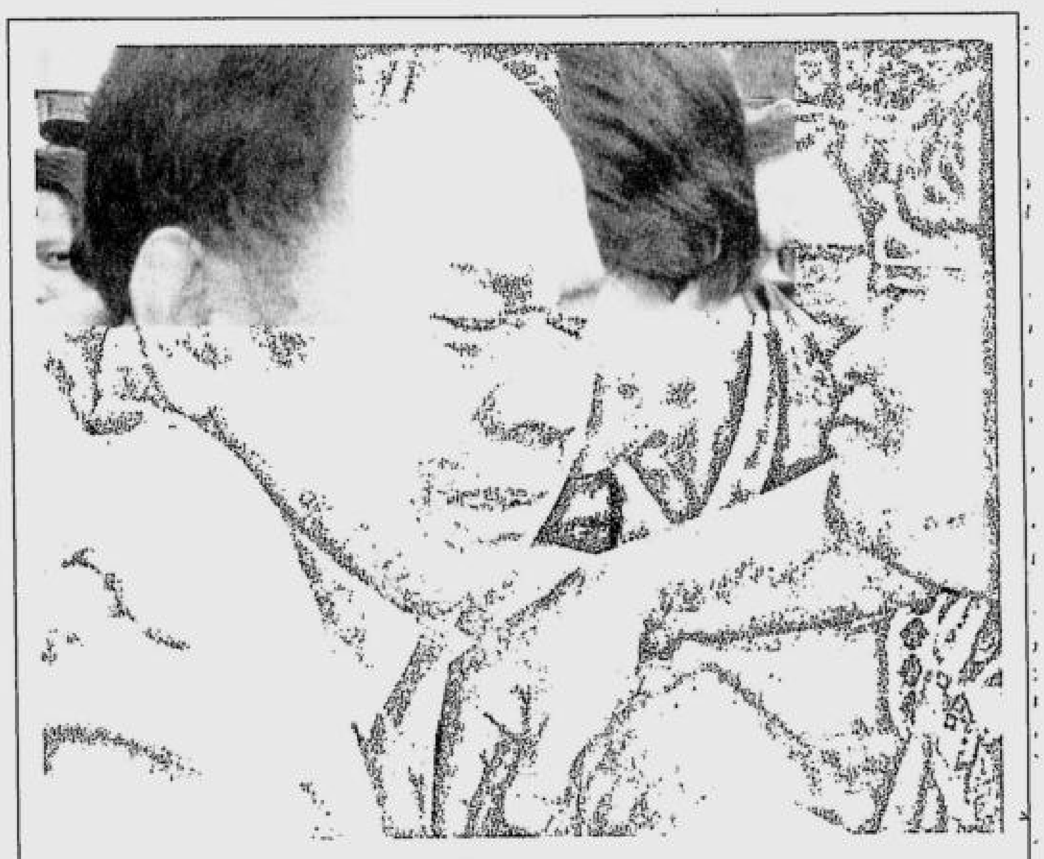
The draft suggested a date of 2010 for the elimination of the subsidies or within a period of five years but both suggestions were inside brackets, meaning neither may be adopted in the end.

"In 1999, it was the power of the people on the streets that saved the world from disaster. It was the same thing in Cancun," Bello said before some 1,000 protesters assembled at Victoria Park yesterday. He was referring to the acrimonious collapse of negotiations on the so-called Doha trade round at a WTO meeting in Cancun, Mexico, two years ago.

The militant leaders lauded the hard stance and networking initiatives being done by the Philippines, Indonesia, South Africa, Venezuela and Cuba inside the WTO plenary hall.

The Philippines, along with 10 other countries, had signed and submitted a petition paper seeking more flexibility for developing countries' industries under the Non-Agriculture Market Access.

Earlier, another group of activists belonging to the International League of People's Struggle opened the day with their own march to the convention center. It was led by five Philippine party-list representatives. *Blanche S. Rivera, AFP and Reuters*



THEY LOVE HIM DOWN THERE

DANTE M. IDARIA/CONTRIBUTOR

Former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano is mobbed by supporters on arrival at Lumbia airport in Cagayan de Oro City yesterday. Garcillano will reportedly spend the Christmas holidays at his home in the city and return to Manila in January for the resumption of the House inquiry into the "Hello Garci" wiretap scandal.

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Abat et al. mull raps vs DOJ chief, police

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

NOW, IT'S THEIR DETRACTORS WHO WILL be on the receiving end.

Former defense chief Fortunato Abat and other leaders of his "revolutionary transition government" are gearing to get back at Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and the Philippine National Police for their unlawful arrest and detention.

Former Ambassador Roy Señeres, one of the three who along with Abat were charged with inciting to sedition on Thursday, said they would file charges against Gonzalez before the Ombudsman.

Charges would also be filed against PNP officials "to teach them a lesson" against making arbitrary arrests, he said.

"We are currently meeting to finalize plans. We're filing cases against the DOJ and the PNP for illegal arrest and detention immediately," said lawyer Reynaldo Robles, who represents Abat and his group.

The 80-year-old Abat along with Señeres, former Budget Secretary Salvador Enriquez and lawyer Carlos Serapio were arrested by policemen in plainclothes and detained overnight Thursday, after they declared a "transition government" at Club Filipino.

They were charged with inciting to sedition on Friday but were released after posting bail of P12,000 each.

Señeres said Gonzalez had issued an unlawful order for their arrest because the President had directed him to do so.

"I don't want to file a complaint (against PNP officials) because they happen to be close friends. But they should be taught an example. They're not supposed to follow illegal orders from this President," Señeres said.

Robles said the PNP illegally arrested Abat and his group because they had no arrest warrant.

The PNP deployed plainclothes cops to make a "citizen's arrest," an act that legal experts found laughable.

Robles said there was nothing seditious about Abat's declaring himself "president of a transitional government."

"There was no call to violence. He was only calling for a peaceful takeover of government by the people," Robles said.

"The general wasn't asking the military or anyone in government to withdraw support. He said he was hoping they will withdraw," he said.

Abat's overnight detention and the charges against him have put him in good humor.

Instead of getting peeved for being ridiculed for his antics, Abat was amused. Yesterday, he turned the tables on his critics.

"You know, it's Gonzalez who is senile... The last time he blew the candles on his birthday cake, he got not only his wish, he also got hernia," Abat said.

To congressmen who called him crazy, Abat branded them as "pork barrel-crazy pest(s) the nation would be better off without."

To Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, who called Abat's move "pathetic and amusing," Abat reminded him of his "Hello Garci" tapes blunder. "The tapes were indeed pathetic but I doubt if they amused the 85 million Filipinos," said Abat.

Malacañang is downplaying Abat's sedition case as a mere "police matter."

"As far as Malacañang is concerned, this issue is now over," said Bunye in a radio interview. "This is now a police matter and what the police have done cannot be criticized because it was done within the bounds of the law," Bunye said. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Philip C. Tubeza*

A chilly Christmas for GMA

NO LINGERING POLITICAL CRISIS OR fresh wave of coup rumors will stop President Macapagal-Arroyo and the First Family from celebrating Christmas in Baguio City.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye confirmed yesterday President Arroyo would stick with her Christmas tradition of spending the holidays in chilly and pine-scented Baguio, something she has done in three of her four years in power.

The only time the President skipped Christmas and the New Year in Baguio was in 2003 in deference to the victims of the killer landslides that hit Southern Leyte and the Caraga Region that year.

The President's move to stick to her normal schedule is in keeping with Malacañang's strategy of projecting normalcy in its operations amid the most serious political crisis to affect the administration. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

DOLE sets holiday pay guidelines

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMployment yesterday issued the guidelines for workers who report for duty on Dec. 26 (Monday) and Dec. 31 (Saturday), which Malacañang has declared special non-working days.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said those who work on Dec. 26 and 31 are entitled to receive 30 percent more of their daily wage, and another 30 percent more of their hourly rate for overtime work.

Workers who report for duty on these days even if it's their day-off would be paid an additional 50 percent of their daily rate plus 30 percent more of this hourly rate in case of overtime.

Sto. Tomas stressed that on special non-working days, the "no work, no pay" policy applies unless there was a favorable company policy, practice or collective bargaining agreement provision granting payment on a special day even if the day was unworked.

For Dec. 25 (Christmas), Dec. 30 (Rizal Day) and Jan. 1 (New Year's Day), which are regular holidays, the following rules apply:

Workers who report for duty on any of these days shall have their daily pay doubled. They would also be paid an additional 30 percent of their hourly rate if they work overtime.

If the days fall on an employee's rest day and he/she reports for work, the same rule applies except that the daily pay would become 230 percent.

As this developed, an estimated 5 million minimum wage earners will no longer have to pay the 10 percent withholding tax.

Trade Union Congress of the Philippines secretary general Ernesto "Boy" Herrera said yesterday the government decision to provide the tax exemption would be a "considerable relief to ordinary workers."

"At this difficult time when both industries and labor are reeling from the punches of the expanded value-added tax (VAT) and soaring energy prices, government should share in the pain by finally removing the withholding tax on low-wage earners," the former senator said.

3,000 Pinoys headed to New Caledonia

A BIG MINING COMPANY IN NEW CALEDONIA, a French territory located in the South Pacific, will hire some 3,000 Filipino workers for a large-scale mining project on the island, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Friday.

The DFA said Inco-Goro Nickel Co. of New Caledonia (INCO), said to be the biggest nickel mining company in the world, will employ the workers for the construction of a nickel and cobalt processing plant.

AG&P Phil. and EEI Phil. will facilitate the deployment of the workers who are expected to arrive in batches up to an estimated 3,000 by the middle of next year.

The project is expected to be completed in 2007.

Philippine Consul General to Sydney Maria Theresa Lazaro met with INCO executives on Dec. 13 in a media conference held in Noumea, the capital of New Caledonia .

In a report to the DFA, Lazaro said the mining executives gave the assurance that the Filipino workers' rights would be observed and protected, in accordance with international and local labor laws.

"The Philippines looks forward to the successful implementation of this project. We are proud to contribute our share in the future development of New Caledonia," Lazaro said in a statement.

She added: "We hope that this paves the way for future areas of cooperation that would be ultimately beneficial to all."

Nikko Dizon

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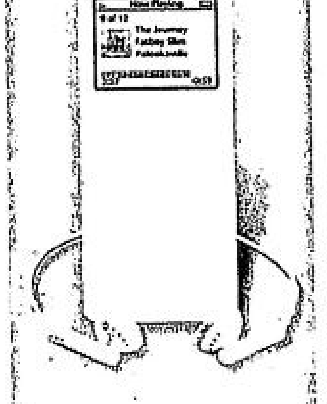

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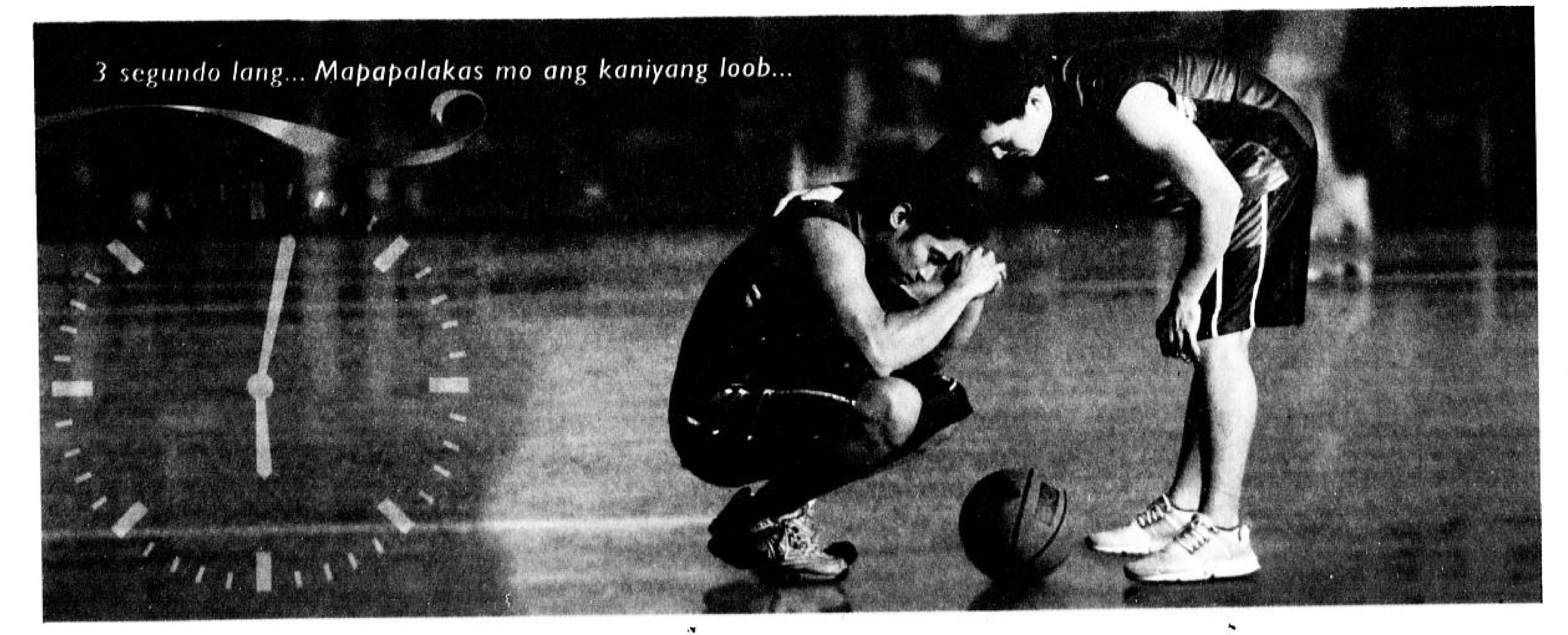
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VICTORIAS
MILLING COMPANY

NOTICE OF STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Section 1, Article VIII of the Amended By-Laws, the Annual Stockholders' Meeting of VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC. ("VMC") will be held on Tuesday, 07 February 2006 at 9 o'clock a.m. at the Metropolitan Club, Inc., Estrella cor. Amapola Streets, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City.

The AGENDA of the meeting will be as follows -

1. Call to Order.
2. Certification of Notice to Stockholders and Presence of Quorum.
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Stockholders' Meeting held on 01 April 2005.
4. Presentation of the Annual Report.
5. Ratification of Acts and Proceedings of the Board of Directors and Corporate Officers.
6. Appointment of External Auditors.
7. Election of Members of the Board of Directors.
8. Other Matters.
9. Adjournment.

Minutes of the last Regular Stockholders' Meeting and resolutions of the Board of Directors from 01 January 2005 will be available for examination during office hours at the VMC Makati Office located at 9126 Sultana corner Honradez Streets, Barangay Olympia, Makati City.

Stockholders who will not, are unable to, or do not expect to attend the meeting in person may, at their option, designate their authorized representatives by means of a PROXY which should be submitted to Ms. Denia D. Austria at the VMC Makati Office, located at 9126 Sultana corner Honradez Streets, Barangay Olympia, Makati City, to Atty. Eva A. Vicencio-Rodriguez at VICMICO Compound, Victorias City, Negros Occidental or to Fidelity Stock Transfers, Inc. at Ground Floor, PHILEX Building, 27 Brixton corner Fairlane Streets, Pasig City, Metro Manila not later than 28 January 2006 at 5 o'clock p.m.

Only Stockholders of Record as of 5 o'clock p.m. of 15 January 2006 shall be entitled to vote at this meeting.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CORPORATION IS NOT SOLICITING PROXIES.

With respect to the nominations and elections of all directors, pursuant to Section 4, Article VI and Section 8, Article VIII of the Amended By-Laws, stockholders must submit their nominations to the Nomination, Remuneration & Compensation Committee and the Corporate Secretary at the following addresses not later than 5 o'clock p.m. of 24 December 2005.

NOMINATION, REMUNERATION & COMPENSATION COMMITTEE
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC.
9126 Sultana cor. Honradez Sts.,
Barangay Olympia, Makati City

ATTY. SANTIAGO T. GABIONZA, JR.
Corporate Secretary
VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC.
9126 Sultana cor. Honradez Sts.,
Barangay Olympia, Makati City

All nominations should include (1) signature of the nominating stockholder, (ii) acceptance and conformity of the nominee, (iii) curriculum vitae of the nominee, (iv) a statement that the nominee has all the qualifications and none of the disqualifications as set forth in the Corporation's Manual on Corporate Governance, Section 38 of the Securities Regulation code ("SRC"), Rule 38 of the SRC, the SEC Memorandum Circular No. 2, Series of 2002 dated 05 April 2002, and the SEC Memorandum Circular No. 16 dated 28 November 2002; (v) information on the relationship of the nominee to the stockholder submitting the nomination, and (vi) all relevant information about the nominee's qualification.

For your convenience in registering your attendance, please present any form of identification, such as driver's license, passport, voter's I.D., Social Security System Member Card or Tax Identification Number Card. Your duly designated proxy is required to present a copy of the duly executed proxy form. Registration will start at 7 o'clock a.m and will close at exactly 8:30 a.m.

Please be guided accordingly.

SANTIAGO T. GABIONZA, JR.
Corporate Secretary

Notice06

Senate rejects ConCom report: It's so Marcos

From page A1

Said opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson: "Charter change under this regime is doomed in the Senate. They simply won't have the numbers, unless they resort to foul tactics."

The 55-member commission chaired by former University of the Philippines president Jose Abueva had proposed that the 2007 election be foregone (No-El) to allow the senators and congressmen whose terms are expiring in that year to make up the interim parliament.

It proposed as well that Ms Arroyo become head of both the state and the government, with supervision over an interim prime minister who will assume strong powers in 2010.

But Senator Arroyo said: "It is bad enough that the draft Constitution by the ConCom is unoriginal. What makes it worse is that it is a copycat, a plagiarism of [Ferdinand] Marcos' 1973 Constitution."

'Marcosian stamps'

The maverick administration senator recalled how the 1973 Constitution stated that senators and congressmen who affixed their signatures to it would automatically become members of the interim Batasang Pambansa.

He said the 1973 Charter also provided that Marcos would be president and prime minister until a new president was elected.

"With such Marcosian stamps and footprints, how can anyone support the ConCom proposals?" Arroyo said.

Administration Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, also recalled the time he was a member of the commission that drafted the 1973 Charter.

He said Presidential Proclamation 1102, which embodied the draft Constitution, promised to make those who would approve it members of the Batasan.

But Marcos eventually abolished the Batasan. *"Na-onse na kami, na-uto pa* (We were not only gypped, but also made fools of)," Gordon said.

Lowest form of bribery

In Gordon's opinion, the ConCom's proposal is the "lowest form of bribery" to legislators.

"It's saying, 'We leaders are all protected. Let's just make fools of the people,'" he said. "The people will say, *Binababoy ninyo* (You're making a mess of) the Constitution for your personal interest."

He also said the situation would reflect badly on Ms Arroyo, Speaker Jose de Venecia and former President Fidel Ramos, who could be seen as the ones with vested interests behind the move.

GORDON

According to Gordon, this was not the time to push for Charter change because of the "cloud of doubt" on the legitimacy of Ms Arroyo's presidency.

"This has become a moral issue because it seems we are being forced to change the Charter," Gordon said.

Lacson said the proposed no-election provision was a form of pork barrel being dangled in exchange for the lawmakers' approval of Charter change.

"The ConCom, being a Palace creation, is obviously following GMA's pattern of buying the votes of lawmakers, only this time not with taxpayers' money but with term extension. If they think we [can all be bought], they are wrong," Lacson said.

Pangilinan said the No-El proposal was unacceptable.

"The 2007 election is the only immediate constitutional opportunity to which the people can resort to pass judgment on the administration and its candidates. To my mind, since GMA refuses to step down, the '07 election should proceed as a referendum on her presidency, wherein our people can support or reject her candidates," he said.

'Don't be cynical'

Like Javier, Ilocos Sur Rep. Salacnib Baterina lauded the ConCom report and said the House would "definitely give weight" to its proposals.

"Instead of being cynical... these critics should give the panel's final report a chance to be studied by Congress during our deliberations on [Charter change]," Baterina said.

He added: "The report is worth taking up because it is a product of consultations, careful study and debates. The recommendations will undoubtedly change the country's political landscape radically once finalized and adopted by Congress and the people."

Baterina also said he and his colleagues expected the opposition to step up attacks against the report, with statements tagging the ConCom as "a Palace puppet" or "a rubber stamp."

Javier expressed the hope that the senators would "not be short-sighted and biased against the ConCom report."

"To tag the ConCom's recommendations, particularly the no-elections proposal, as part of the Palace's carrot and stick ploy is unfair to the well-respected people [in the commission]," he said. "The No-El proposal is purely meant to ensure a smooth transition to a parliamentary shift."

'Indecent proposal'

But House Deputy Minority Leader Roilo Golez warned his colleagues against voting for the No-El proposal, saying they might be liable for violating the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act if they did so.

He said the proposed postponement of the 2007 election and extension of the terms of elective officials to 2010 was "an indecent proposal."

"I see it as a Malacañang-inspired ploy, in the same league as the fertilizer scam, to bribe elective officials to support the proposed constitutional amendments," Golez said.

"Imagine, congressmen and senators, governors and mayors on their last term are being bribed with a three-year additional term without reelection. That is more enticing than a 75-percent fertilizer fund overprice. And the rest getting three years without campaigning," he said.

Golez said incumbent representatives could not vote for such an amendment because it would allow them to extend their terms and would be tantamount to "granting [themselves] pecuniary and political benefits derived from the extended term."

Enrile, formerly of the opposition and now an "independent," said the ConCom proposals were not binding on the Senate.

Pangilinan said that while the ConCom or the President could submit the report to the Senate, the chamber would not be bound or limited by it.

Besides, under the Constitution, it is Congress that can propose amendments, not a consultative group formed by the President, he said.

The Senate is not even keen on tackling the resolution earlier approved by the House calling on the two chambers to convene as a constituent assembly to amend the 1987 Charter.

The resolution was referred to Gordon's committee last week but the chamber adjourned for the Christmas break without the committee deliberating on it.

"The senators are not very interested in it," Gordon had said.

Doctor of champions makes it…

From page A1

Games in Italy.

Dr. Martin Camara, 38, was chosen from among doctors involved in sports medicine worldwide.

While he will be working behind the scenes, he said there was prestige in being the first Filipino to be included in the pool.

"It's quite an honor to be anywhere near the Olympics," Camara told the INQUIRER on Friday. "But to be chosen to provide chiropractic services in an Olympic event is, to me, an amazing experience."

Camara will be in the Italian city of Torino for the duration of the Games from Feb. 10 to 26, dealing with Olympians, past and present, and of different colors and creeds.

He was chosen for his expertise and contributions in the field of chiropractic, a medical treatment focused on the alignment and manipulation of body structures such as the spinal column to treat problems like low back pain and slipped discs.

Camara got the official invitation from Dr. Thomas Hyde, president of the International Sports Chiropractic Commission on Dec. 2 at the height of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games.

Camara, a US-trained chiropractor for 12 years now, said the selection committee might have taken notice of his work in the SEA Games.

He formulated an enhancement program which combined conventional and alternative medicine specifically for athletes of the Philippine Amateur Swimming Association.

How chiropractic works

The goal was to condition the body before, during and immediately after events so athletes could perform at their optimum level, he said.

Nine divers were given the treatment and seven walked away with gold medals, including triple gold medalist Shiela Mae Perez.

Camara was quick not to grab credit for his wards' gold medal haul. But no less than the athletes themselves acknowledged that the treatment wasn't something to be ignored.

"It's the first time I experienced something like this. It was really good," triple gold medalist swimmer Miguel Molina a US-trained swimmer, wrote Camara.

Camara said Molina, who went home with a total of five medals, was actually in excellent shape. But he had some muscle knots, tension and a slight shoulder problem that required chiropractic treatment twice daily.

Perez, the 5-foot-1 diver from Davao, had pain in her foot, a condition which is common among divers.

She was given the Graston Technique which uses stainless steel instruments to treat soft tissue problems.

Early preparation

What was special in the SEA Games treatment program was the combination of conventional programs—like physical therapy and rehabilitation medicine—with alternative methods such as chiropractic and acupuncture.

"We believe that each discipline has something to offer and we would like to combine the best of what the disciplines could offer," Camara said.

Then came the call from Hyde asking that the program be documented to be used as a model for the polyclinics of the Olympics.

Camara is busy preparing for the Winter Games, studying the different events. He's into sports like baseball, basketball and martial arts but knows very little about winter events.

"Honestly, I don't know much about winter sports [because] I'm from the Philippines," he said. "Before February, I will know [them] like the back of my hand because that's how I am. I don't go into a situation where I am unprepared."

Wear and tear

Camara is confident because every human body, in essence, is the same body.

"If you know how it functions, you'll know what injuries would develop from certain activities and you'll know how to enhance a performance or treat injuries based on your understanding of human dynamics," he said.

For instance, the body's condition in bobsleigh shouldn't be any different from that in car racing.

Bobsleigh is a winter sport where teams make timed runs down narrow, twisting, iced tracks in a gravity-powered sled. In the US, the sport is known as bobsled.

Like car racing, the event requires finely coordinated and quick movements that could cause problems in the head, neck, lower back, hip and knee.

Camara explained: "We're not talking about injuries, just the wear and tear [of the body] from the sport."

Filipino team

Just recently, Camara was told that the Philippines might participate in the Winter Games.

In the past, Filipinos engaged in winter sports had sought and obtained sanction from the Philippine Olympic Committee to compete as a Philippine team but no one has come close to bringing home a medal.

The latest word was that the country's had a skiing team competing in Torino.

If it's true then Camara would be in good company.

MNLF members seek exile for Nur Misuari

COTABATO CITY – MORO NATIONAL Liberation Front members loyal to Nur Misuari have asked the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to "initiate diplomatic representations" with the Philippine government to effect the jailed former MNLF chair's release on humanitarian grounds.

In a two-page petition dated Dec. 15, the group said it preferred that the Philippine government and the OIC Committee of the Eight settled Misuari's case through diplomatic avenues "within the tenets of international laws," which include allowing him to go into exile in "a willing third host country."

Misuari is facing sedition charges for leading a rebellion in Sulu several years ago aimed at derailing the elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Two blocs in the MNLF claiming to constitute its original core group – the Mutallah National Force Command and the Mobile Force – jointly initiated the petition with more than 500 commanders signing it, according to the note attached to the copy of the petition e-mailed to the INQUIRER on Friday.

The petition sought the convening of the OIC Tripartite Meeting to deliberate on "efficacious diplomatic alternatives within the tenets of International Laws to effect proper representation with the Philippine Government in the name of humanitarian consideration… in behalf of Prof. Nur Misuari and the entire Bangsamoro that he represents through the MNLF."

It called on the Committee of the Eight to consider making representations with the Philippine government to allow Misuari the diplomatic option of exile in a host country "where he can live and lead a life of peace and tranquility with his family and with lesser restrictions on his liberty than imprisonment." *Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Brits warned on going to Mindanao

THE UNITED KINGDOM ON FRIDAY renewed its travel advisory on the Philippines, this time warning its citizens about the ongoing military and police operations against insurgent groups in Mindanao.

"We advise against all travel to central, southern and western Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago, including Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Jolo, where there are ongoing military and police operations against insurgent groups," read the advisory posted on the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website, www.fco.gov.uk.

"You should take particular care in the rest of Mindanao, including Davao," the advisory said.

On Thursday, three Army officers were killed in North Cotabato after NPA guerrillas detonated a bomb as their military convoy passed by.

The advisory reiterated its warning to British citizens of the "high threat of terrorism throughout the Philippines." *Nikko Dizon*

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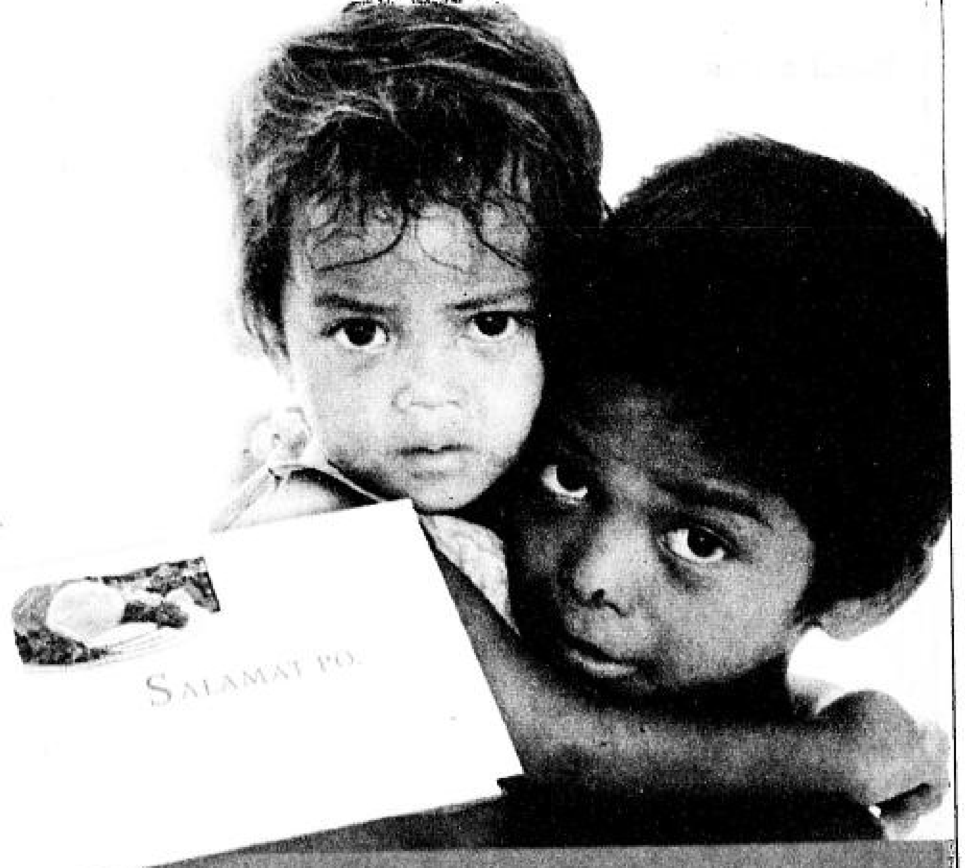

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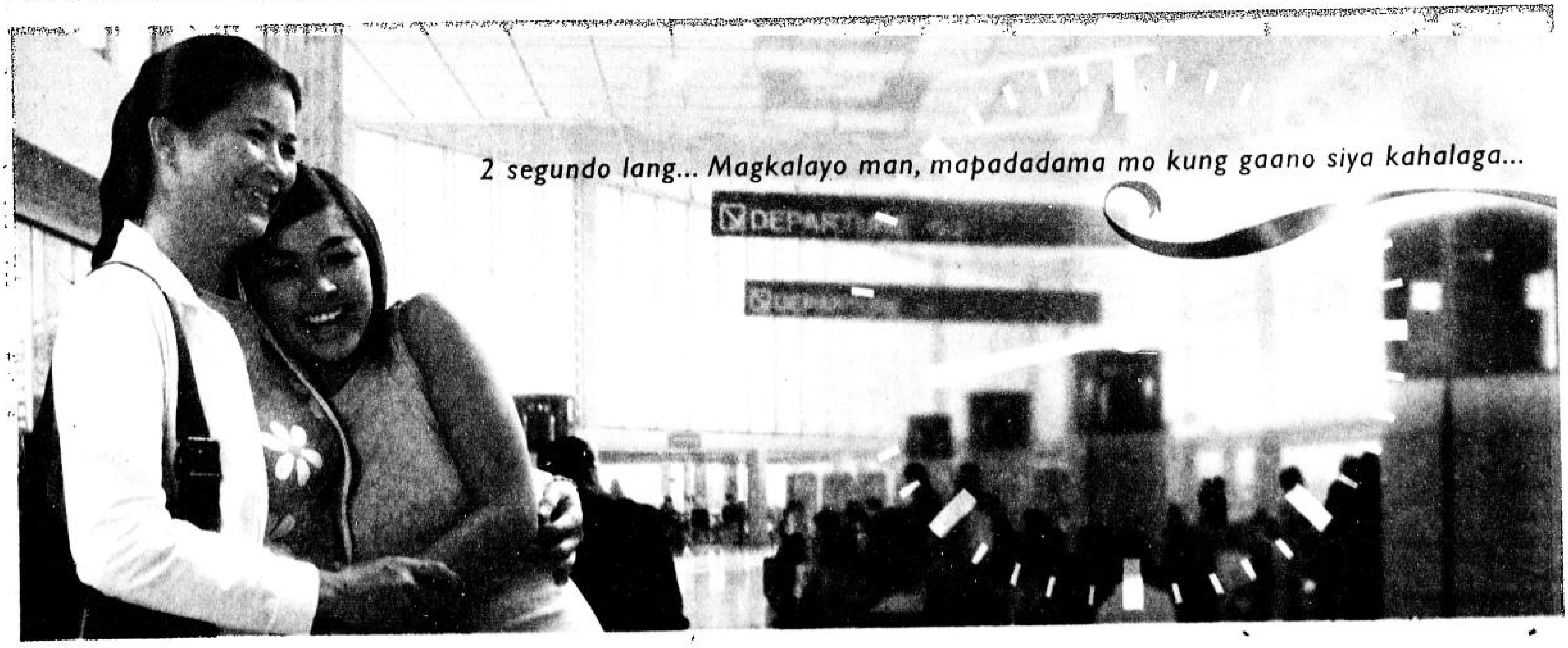
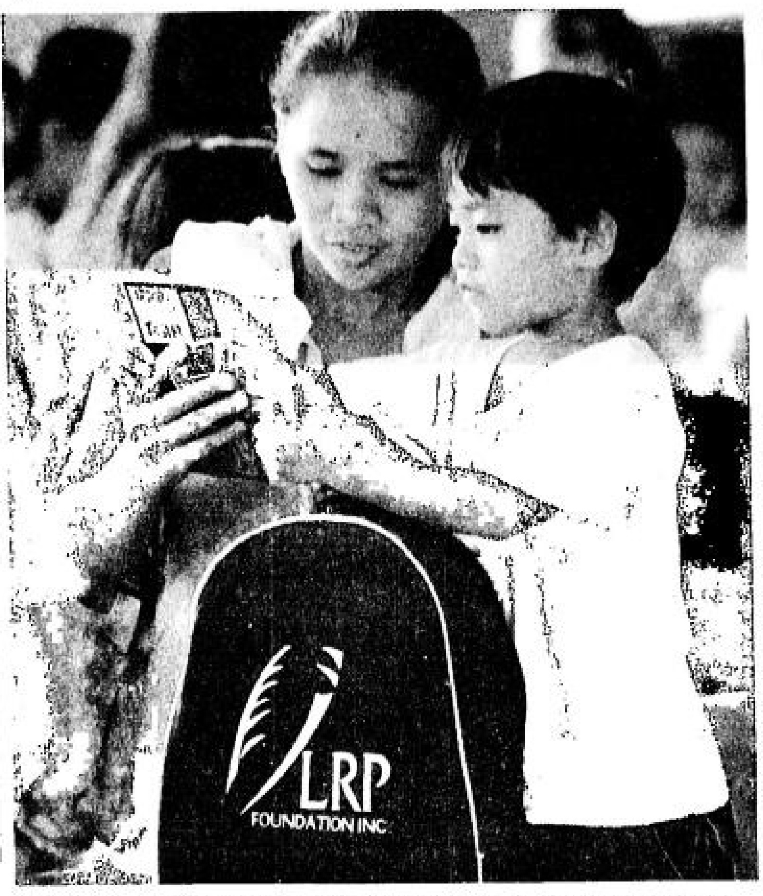

2 segundo lang... Magkalayo man, mapadadama mo kung gaano siya kahalaga...
DEPART

THE RUFINO-PRIETO CLAN with friends and volunteers of the Luis Rufino Prieto Foundation, Hapagasa and Pondo ng Pinoy feed indigent children and distribute gifts on Saturday at the Holy Family Parish in San Andres Bukid, Malate. This is an annual activity of the foundation.



MOTHER AND CHILD eagerly check out their gifts from the LRP Foundation.

PHOTOS BY REM ZAMORA

Gov't to Meralco: Pay ₱42-B debt

From page A1

was a "rehash" of an old issue.

"The P42 billion is a ridiculous amount, it's not even funny," he said.

The P42 billion represents the amount of power that Meralco had committed to purchase from Napocor since 2001 under the terms of a supply contract signed in November 1994. In it, Meralco, as a distribution utility, undertook to buy 3,600 megawatts of electricity daily from Napocor, the country's main power generator.

More power from IPPs

However, Meralco's power purchases from Napocor had been steadily declining over the years, which had directly led to increased electricity rates for consumers and exacerbated the debt-laden Napocor's financial difficulties.

According to a report by the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC), a non-government organization advocating a reduction in the government budget for payment of onerous debts, Napocor sales to Meralco in the early part of 2002 had fallen by 18.6 percent.

It said this was because Meralco was purchasing more power from its affiliate independent power producers which it said were now supplying 65 percent of Meralco's energy requirements.

Meralco controls about 70 percent of the power supply in Metro Manila and about 60 percent nationwide.

The IPPs from which Meralco gets most of its electricity supply charge about P4.21 per kilowatt hour while Napocor charges P2.46 per kWh, or a difference of at least P1.75 per kWh.

By allowing Meralco to continue to buy from its IPPs—Quezon Power Phils. and First Gas Holdings Corp.—the government was tolerating the high cost of electricity charged by Meralco, FDC said.

Down to 35%

According to Palace sources, the President has been informed that Meralco continues to draw more electricity from its IPPs and that this has already reached 65 percent of the total amount of power that Meralco supplies to Metro Manila and neighboring provinces.

The amount of electricity that Napocor supplies to Meralco has been reduced to 35 percent, they said.

The FDC strongly opposed a settlement agreement signed on July 15, 2003, that would reduce Meralco's debt to Napocor from P42 billion to just P27 billion.

While the Energy Regulatory Commission, the state power regulator, is still studying the agreement, Malacañang sources said President Macapagal-Arroyo wants the entire P42 billion collected.

The negotiations to collect the debt have been complicated by a case filed with the Ombudsman last month by lawyer Gualberto de la Llana questioning the July 2003 agreement.

Documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed that Meralco was trying to bring down the amount to P15 billion while parallel government efforts to collect the entire P42 billion are going on.

Refuting computation

During the negotiations on the July 2003 agreement, Meralco questioned the debt's computation and said it was willing to pay up to P15 billion.

Cuna said the dispute has undergone arbitration by the ERC and reiterated that Meralco refuted the computation.

One of the options proposed by the memorandum to the President was for the government to bind Meralco to a deal requiring it to pay the debt by asking the utility to issue promissory notes.

"This will not incur any additional cost to Meralco consumers" although it could directly affect Meralco's financial condition, according to the memorandum for Ms Arroyo.

Debt conversion

Under the debt conversion, Meralco would transfer an equivalent value of Meralco shares in favor of Napocor, the memo stated.

"Napocor will acquire P42 billion worth of Meralco stock that can either be preferred, common, voting or even non-voting," it said.

The government could either sell the Meralco shares in the market or take over the firm and thereby bring down electricity rates, the memo said.

"The issuance of these shares will not inflict any pain on ordinary stockholders who have invested in Meralco nor will it change any of the stockholders' rights and benefits accruing to the shares," the memorandum said.

It said "this action will not involve additional costs to Meralco's customers."

Though commonly referred to as a Lopez-owned company, Meralco has many owners, including the government and foreigners.

The government already controls 15.23 percent of Meralco, through shares listed under the Republic of the Philippines, the Social Security System, the Land Bank of the Philippines, the Home Development Mutual Fund and the Philippine Health Insurance Corp.

The Lopez family and Lopez-controlled companies account for 35.77 percent of Meralco's total common shares. The bulk of this, or 22.84 percent, is owned by First Philippine Union Fenosa Inc., a joint venture between the Spanish-based utility Union Fenosa and first Philippine Holdings (FPHC), a subsidiary of the Lopez-owned Benpres Holdings Corp. The rest is owned by the Meralco Pension Fund, FPHC and various Lopez family members.

As of September 2005, 39.55 percent of Meralco's common shares were held by PCD Nominee Corp., broken down into 25.93 percent in Filipino shares and 13.62 in non-Filipino shares.

Debt to equity

The memo said that by converting the debt to Meralco shares of stock the government would have better control of power supply and costs.

"With a significant number of shares, Napocor will have more leverage in the restructuring of the power industry" according to the terms of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, it said.

The conversion of Meralco's debts to shares of stock would also compel Meralco to source more of its electricity from Napocor and therefore reduce the cost of electricity, it said.

It said that by reducing the amount of electricity being supplied by Meralco's IPPs and increasing that being supplied by Napocor, "there will be no need to have a fire sale of Napocor generation assets."

The memo said Napocor could also choose to directly sell electricity at "special rates to qualified bulk consumers."

Worst over for RP, says energy chief

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—DESPITE THE CONTINUED high prices of imported fuel, the worst is over for the country, said Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla.

He said the critical period was in September when the price of Dubai crude reached $56.54 per barrel and when unleaded gas hit $79.40 and diesel fuel $79.67.

"Even if (the price) increases in January or February, our expectation is that it will not be as high as in September," Lotilla told the INQUIRER after a briefing on the power situation attended by businessmen here.

He said any increase next year would be temporary because new production would by then come on stream in the world market.

Lotilla said that while there was still no local production of ethanol, President Macapagal-Arroyo had already ordered the lowering of tariff duties of imported ethanol to 1 percent and had pegged the excise tax to 5 centavos per liter.

Power . . .

From page A1

Power plays are part of the territory in Malacañang which has been described by present and past occupants as a "snake pit" of intrigue and clashing interests, where only the toughest, it is said, survive.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda said the President was ill advised on the EO, which he described as a "policy quicksand."

"I urge the President to immediately revoke it and just assign the DOE additional tasks to extend, expand or clarify its existing mandate," Salceda told the INQUIRER. "No self respecting professional will serve as energy secretary in the context of EO 474. It significantly encroaches on the functions and responsibilities of the DOE and effectively reduces him to the monitoring of oil prices, which could be done by the Department of Trade and Industry."

Crises cited

The EO cited the crisis situation in the oil industry for the need to create the new office which would initiate the development of indigenous fuel resources.

It also took note of the urgency of creating an agency that would steer the DOE and other government agencies to attract more capital to the energy sector, as well as secure funding from government financial institutions, private financiers and international lending agencies.

The Malacañang source said Abaya had been after the post of Lotilla since the latter handed in his resignation six months ago when Ms Arroyo called for all Cabinet officials to resign to give her a free hand in reorganizing her official family.

Lotilla's authority

Ms Arroyo made the move at the height of the "Hello Garci" tape scandal in order to jump the gun on the "Hyatt 10" officials, who resigned en masse and then urged her to also step down.

The source said Lotilla might push through with his plan to quit the administration in the face of the alleged efforts to undermine his authority. Lotilla was one of the Cabinet secretaries the Hyatt 10 had claimed would follow their lead.

Abaya clashed in 2001 with then Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, who accused him of culpability in the surge in the importation of ozone-depleting substances during his stint as director of the Environmental Management Bureau, which issues permits for the importation of cooling agents used in refrigerators and air conditioners.

The case arose from a complaint by the Swedish government which noted a rise in the consumption of ozone-depleting chemicals and reminded the Philippine government of its commitment to the Montreal Protocol.

Abaya was relieved of his post but he protested that this was done without due process and he denied Alvarez's allegations. He sued Alvarez for libel. The court dismissed the case.

Flashing . . .

From page A1

exposed himself to young women five times in Swanage, three times while wearing a Santa Claus outfit, said Dorset police.

Three girls in their mid-teens were his first victims, with two women aged 18 and 23 next.

The final three incidents all happened last Sunday—while the offender was dressed up as Father Christmas.

The man approached the women but did not touch them.

Flashing lights may be a normal part of the festive fun around town centers at Christmas time but local police are treating the flashing Santa as no laughing matter.

Policeman Jonathan Maunder said: "I would be very interested to hear from anyone who may have seen someone acting suspiciously while dressed as Father Christmas.

"These incidents of indecent exposure have caused a great deal of upset to the women that the man has approached and we are treating these incidents extremely seriously." *AFP*

RP on verge of biggest real estate boom in 30 years

From page A1

Since the Asian financial crisis brought the property sector into a long swoon in 1997, the industry has been on a slow but steady climb in the last few years.

Salceda expected the property boom would be broad-based—from residential houses and condo units to office towers, leisure facilities and hotels.

Frederick Go, executive vice president of Robinsons Land Corp., agreed the future of real estate was "bright" with dollars from overseas Filipinos expected to spur the industry's growth next year.

Tapping OFW market

At least $1 billion in remittances from Filipinos living or working abroad flow in every month (not counting the dollars sent through informal channels), and Go expects them to spend these dollars buying new houses for their families, high-end condos or resort homes for their own use.

Robinsons Land was one of the first firms to tap the overseas market, which now accounts for roughly a third of its sales. Go said buyers, especially OFWs, were now more discerning of the properties they buy largely because of their exposure to superior standards in First World countries.

Federal Land Inc. president Alfred Ty said the anticipated property boom would be different from that of the past decades.

Demand for quality

"There is an underlying flight to quality in the growing demand for property," Ty said. "Buyers are more knowledgeable now than they were before and they will go to developers that have a long track record, that build classy units whatever the market level and deliver their products on time."

"With people looking for more quality products, we think the industry's growth will be sustained."

The 33-year-old property arm of the Metrobank group has been one of the fastest-growing developers of high-rise towers in the country. It has sold two residential towers in Makati City in just three years and delivered the units on time, in sharp contrast to previous property booms that were long on pre-selling but short on delivery of actual units.

Gov't role

Despite its political troubles, the Arroyo administration has also contributed to setting the stage for a surge in property demand, Salceda said.

Aside from keeping interest rates low through prudent debt management, Salceda said the government was poised to further kick up interest in the real estate sector by jacking up its capital spending by 52 percent next year—the first time in five years that it would be boosting investments in infrastructure.

"This should make the 4.2 million housing backlog a real demand," Salceda said.

Hot demand for office space

Aside from houses and residential condos, another hot factor in the property sector is the rising demand for office space, with vacancy rates dropping from their peak of 60 percent to between 9 and 15 percent at present.

CB Richard Ellis, the world's largest real estate advisory firm, said robust demand for office space was being driven mainly by relocations of multinational corporations and embassies from Grade B and C buildings and by continued demand from new and expanding call centers, business process outsourcing (BPO) providers, and information technology companies.

Bulls running

"Despite medium-term domestic economic concerns, the outlook for the office property sector remains bullish," CB Richard Ellis said. "Limited supplies of suitable Prime/Grade A office space in the Makati CBD will keep vacancy levels in the single digits for the near and medium term while lease expirations in 2006 will be closely watched as they are expected to impact the amount of available space."

The property adviser noted that demand was not confined to Makati and Ortigas.

"Tight supplies of suitable existing office space in Metro Manila is forcing call centers and BPOs with large space requirements to consider locating to areas outside the major central business districts," said CB Richard Ellis, citing the rising trend toward the construction of more build-to-suit buildings (specially in Alabang and Fort Bonifacio), and the conversion of shopping malls and other types of retail establishments to space suitable for call centers.

Leisure and hotels

The property sector is also humming in the leisure and hotel business, with average occupancy rates improving to nearly 75 percent this year from less than 50 percent a few years ago, the highest growth being registered in deluxe suites, according to CB Richard Ellis.

Tourism arrivals are on track to hit 2.66 million this year (up by 6 percent last year), with tourism revenues expected at $2.2 billion (up by 14 percent from last year).

With international arrivals predicted to rise by 15 percent next year (in line with the government's goal of having 5 million tourists by 2010), CB Richard Ellis noted an increasing number of foreign investments going into building deluxe hotels and resort facilities.

"Out of 7,000-plus islands, only one-fourth are currently developed and many hospitality-related facilities need refurbishment or have yet to be built," it said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, December 18, 2005
4th Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: 2nd Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16

A house that will stand forever

When the king had settled in his palace and Yahweh had rid him of all his surrounding enemies, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Look, I live in a house of cedar but the ark of God is housed in a tent." Nathan replied, "Do as it seems fit to you for Yahweh is with you."

But that very night, Yahweh's word came to Nathan, "Go and tell my servant David, this is what Yahweh says: Are you able to build a house for me to live in?

Now you will tell my servant David, this is what Yahweh of hosts says: "I took you from the pasture, from tending the sheep, to make you commander of my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you went, cutting down all your enemies before you. Now I will make your name great as the name of the great ones on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel and plant them that they may live there in peace. They shall no longer be harassed, nor shall wicked men oppress them as before. From the time when I appointed judges over my people Israel it is only to you that I have given rest from all your enemies. Yahweh also tells you that he will build you a house.

"Your house and your reign shall last forever before me, and your throne shall be forever firm."

2nd Reading: Romans 16:25-27

God shows himself in Jesus Christ

Glory to him who is able to give you strength, according to the Good News I proclaim, announcing Christ Jesus.

Now is revealed the mysterious plan kept hidden for long ages in the past.

By the will of the eternal God it is brought to light, through the prophetic books, and all nations shall believe the faith proclaimed to them.

Glory to God, who alone is wise, through Christ Jesus, for ever! Amen.

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Your will for me be done

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth. He was sent to a young virgin who was betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the family of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

The angel came to her and said, "Rejoice, full of grace, the Lord is with you." Mary was troubled at these words, wondering what this greeting could mean.

But the angel said, "Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you. You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus. He will be great and shall rightly be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the kingdom of David, his ancestor; he will rule over the people of Jacob forever and his reign shall have no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be if I am a virgin?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the holy child to be born shall be called Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth is expecting a son in her old age, although she was unable to have a child, and she is now in her sixth month. With God nothing is impossible."

Then Mary said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Commentary

With a week before the birth we flip backwards in time to the moment of the Incarnation when Jesus is conceived in Mary. The Holy Spirit came upon her and the power of the Most High overshadowed her... and now the holy child to be born will be called Son of God. The birth moment draws near. This child was conceived in freedom, in obedience to the Word of God and that Word will soon become flesh in history. How is this to be for us this year? We must ask for the courage to obey and to bring forth the Word in our flesh.

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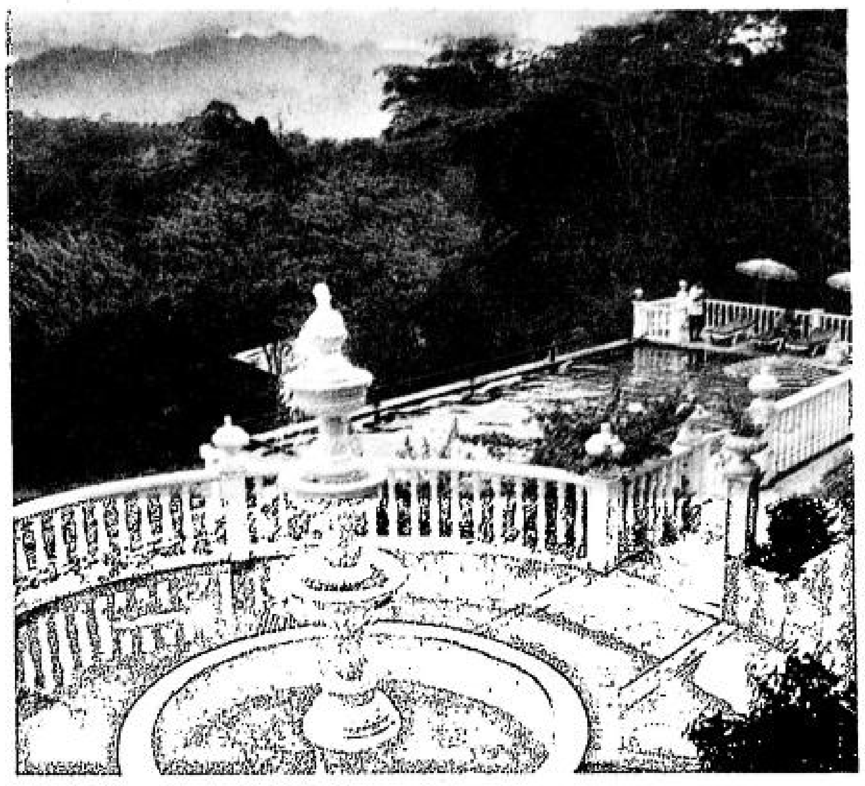

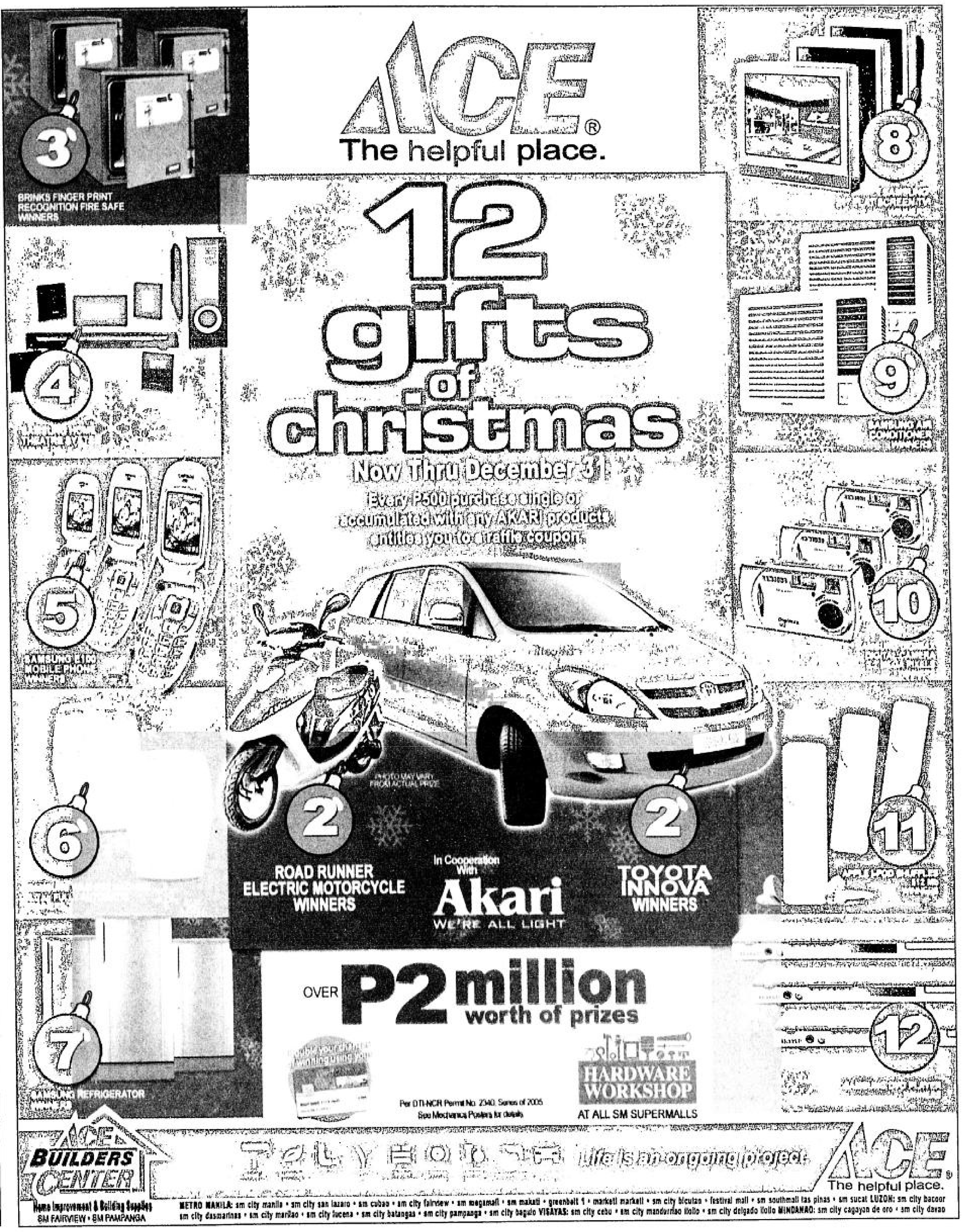

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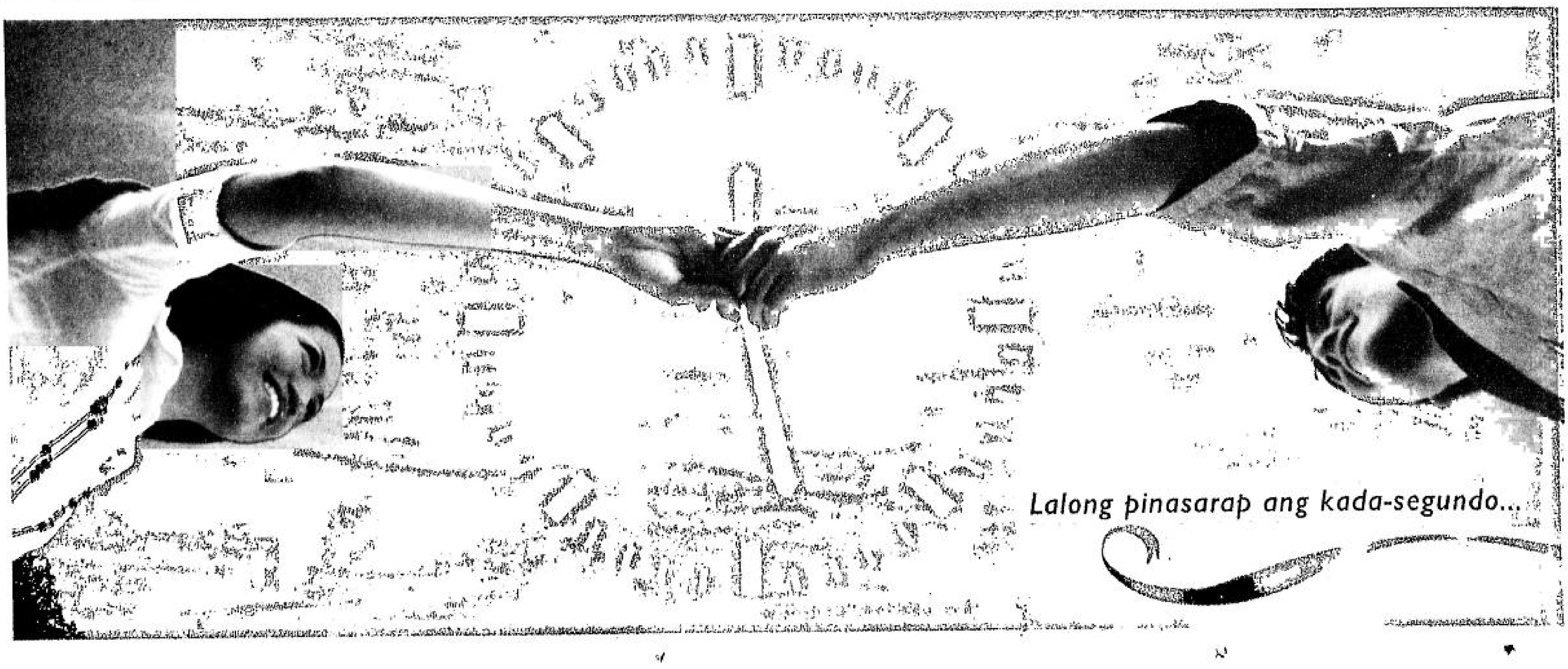


Lalong pinasarap ang kada-segundo...

Bush authorized secretive spying in US, says official

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH has personally authorized a secretive eavesdropping program in the United States more than three dozen times since October 2001, a senior intelligence official said.

The disclosure follows angry demands by lawmakers earlier in the day on Friday for congressional inquiries into whether the monitoring by the highly secretive National Security Agency violated civil liberties.

"There is no doubt that this is inappropriate," declared Republican Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. He promised hearings early next year.

Bush on Friday refused to discuss whether he had authorized such domestic spying without obtaining warrants from a court, saying that to comment would tie his hands in fighting terrorists.

In a broad defense of the program put forward hours later, however, a senior intelligence official told The Associated Press that the eavesdropping was narrowly designed to go after possible terrorist threats in the United States.

The official said that, since October 2001, the program has been renewed more than three dozen times. Each time, the White House counsel and the attorney general certified the lawfulness of the program, the official said. Bush then signed the authorizations.

During the reviews, US government officials have also provided a fresh assessment of the terrorist threat, showing that there is a catastrophic risk to the country or government, the official said.

"Only if those conditions apply do we even begin to think about this," he said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because of the classified nature of the intelligence operation.

"The president has authorized NSA to fully use its resources—let me underscore this now—consistent with US law and the Constitution to defend the United States and its citizens," the official said, adding that congressional leaders have also been briefed more than a dozen times.

Senior administration officials asserted the president would do everything in his power to protect the American people while safeguarding civil liberties.

"I will make this point," Bush said in a television interview with "The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer." "That whatever I do to protect the American people—and I have an obligation to do so—that we will uphold the law, and decisions made are made understanding we have an obligation to protect the civil liberties of the American people."

The surveillance, disclosed in Friday's New York Times, is said to allow the agency to monitor international calls and e-mail messages of people inside the United States. But the paper said the agency would still seek warrants to snoop on purely domestic communications—for example, Americans' calls between New York and California.

"I want to know precisely what they did," Specter said. "How NSA utilized their technical equipment, whose conversations they overheard, how many conversations they overheard, what they did with the material, what purported justification there was."

Sen. Russ Feingold, a Wisconsin Democrat and member of the Judiciary Committee, said, "This shocking revelation ought to send a chill down the spine of every American." *AP*

BIG BROTHER BUSH?

Least popular

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT George W. Bush ranks as the least popular and most bellicose of the last 10 US presidents, according to a new survey.

Only nine percent of the 662 people polled picked Bush as their favorite among the last 10 presidents. John F. Kennedy topped that part of the survey, with 26 percent, closely followed by Bill Clinton (25 percent) and Ronald Reagan (23 percent).

Bush was also viewed as the most warlike president (43 percent), the worst for the economy (42 percent) and the least effective (33 percent). But he was rated most highly in response to a question on who would do the right thing even if it were unpopular.

The survey was conducted by the Chicago-based National Qualitative Centers. *Reuters*

US House moves to halt illegal immigration flood

WASHINGTON—THE US HOUSE of Representatives on Friday passed a bill aimed at stopping the flood of illegal immigrants into the United States after a debate that exposed deep divisions among majority Republicans over President George W. Bush's guest worker proposal.

The House voted 239-182 for the legislation that aims to crack down on illegal immigration by forcing employers to verify the status of workers and raising fines against those who knowingly hire illegal aliens.

It also calls for construction of a high-tech fence along parts of the U.S. border with Mexico, and asks for a study of using barriers along the Canadian border.

It would also make it a felony to live in the United States illegally instead of a civil offense and toughens penalties against document fraud. It also calls on state and local authorities to help enforce immigration laws.

Rep. Thomas Tancredo, a Colorado Republican, said the House bill would discourage illegal immigrants by clamping down on the biggest lure, jobs.

"You will find people will go home and they will go home by the millions," he said. "Those who don't go home you deport." Opponents argued the bill's tough measures would fail to stop the flow of illegal immigrants.

"This misguided legislation fails to secure America's borders," said Rep. Robert Wexler, a Florida Democrat. "It ignores the 11 million illegal immigrants living in the United States and fails to enact common sense reforms." The House voted for the bill after Republican leaders rebuffed efforts by Rep. Jeff Flake, an Arizona Republican, to include language expressing support for a guest worker program as proposed by Bush.

Flake said such a program could be used to address the millions of undocumented aliens already living and working in the United States.

"Without a temporary worker program, we will continue to turn a blind eye to their existence," Flake said. He argued a comprehensive approach is essential to slowing the flood of illegal immigrants into the country.

But fellow Arizona Republican Rep. J.D. Hayworth said a guest worker program would reward those who broke US laws by entering the country illegally.

"They come here for one reason—a job. A guest worker plan that lets illegals keep their jobs is amnesty," he said.

In Mexico, presidential spokesperson Ruben Aguilar said Mexico would keep pushing for a comprehensive immigration reform that expands temporary worker programs.

"An immigration reform that only contemplates security does not resolve the bilateral migration issue," he said.

Each year, more than 1 million undocumented migrants try to slip across the mountains and deserts along the 2,000-mile (3,200-km) US-Mexico border in search of work in the United States. At least 464 died making the journey this year, many from dehydration.

Flake said he believed any final bill coming out of negotiations with the Senate would include a guest worker program. *Reuters*

Iraqis massively back key poll

BAGHDAD—MORE THAN TWO-thirds of Iraq's electorate voted in a landmark election, estimates said Friday, spawning hope for the country and boosting the prospect of encouraging minority Sunnis back into politics.

One day after the election, with Iraq still subjected to tough security measures, millions of ballot papers were being counted in the vote for the first full-term government since Saddam Hussein fell from power in 2003.

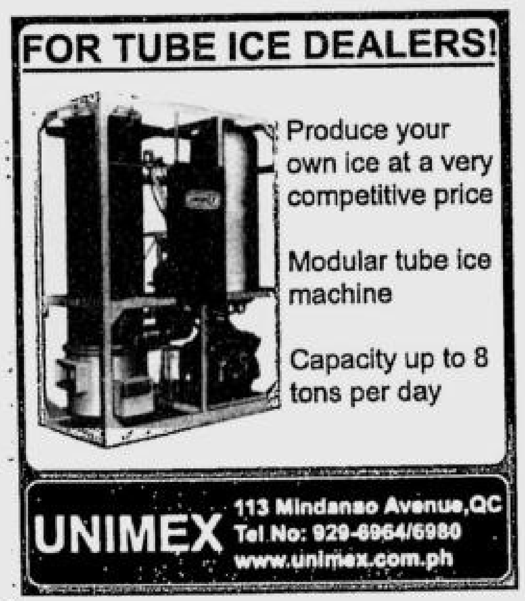
In stark contrast to a January poll, the election was marked by minimal violence and high-turnout, including in Sunni Arab areas that had until now largely boycotted the US-led political transition to sovereignty.

"The number of whose who took part in the ballot should be between 10 and 11 million voters, according to our first estimates," said electoral official Farid Ayar. Eleven million voters would put turnout at just over 70 percent.

International monitors said the election had "generally" met international standards despite some procedural issues and hailed the organizers for meeting a "difficult challenge." Abroad, 320,000 expatriates voted in the election.

Although final results are not expected for at least two weeks, a Western diplomat said a preliminary estimate could be available in four to five days.

In rough estimates, Iraqis seem to have cast ballots along sectarian lines, with Shiite parties scoring well in strongholds in the south, the main Kurdish Alliance romping home in the north with strong turnout in Sunni regions. *AFP*



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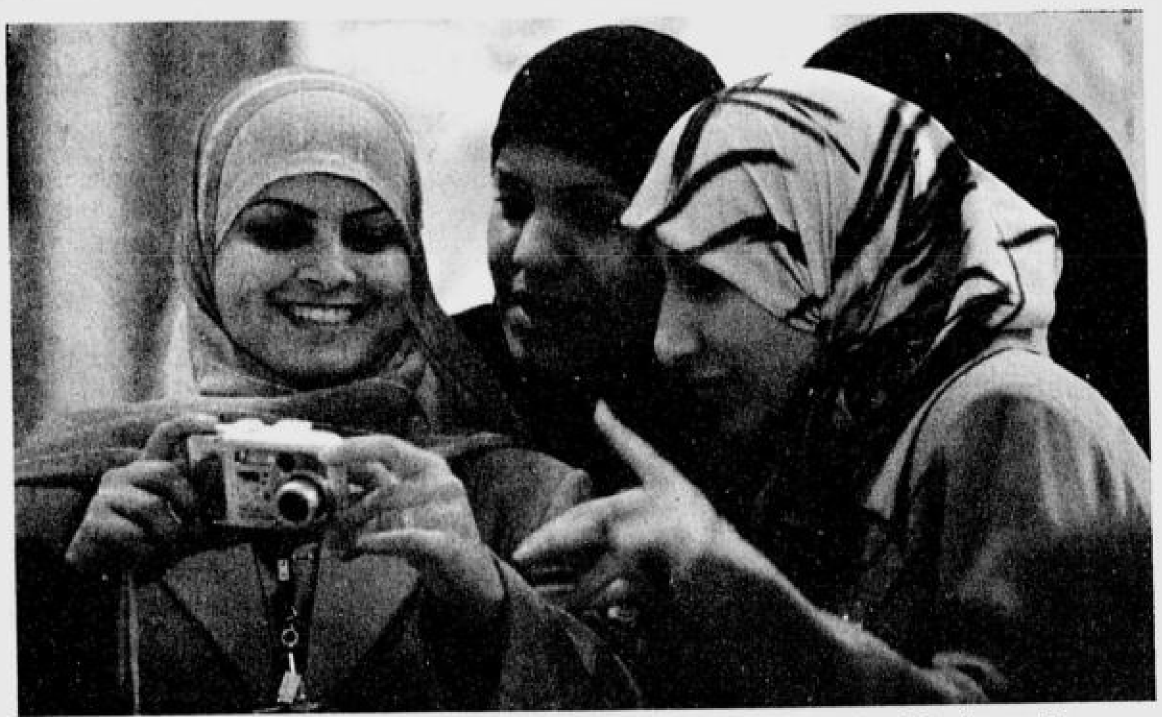

IRAQI election workers look at the images taken of their group at an Iraqi national elections voting center in Dearborn, Mich., Dec. 15. Iraqi expatriates across the globe will help elect Iraq's 275-member National Assembly, which will legislate in the coming four years and choose the first fully constitutional government in that country since the collapse of Saddam Hussein's rule in 2003.

AP

EU leaders finalize long-term budget deal

BRUSSELS—EUROPEAN UNION leaders agreed a long-term budget that put the troubled 25-nation bloc back on track on Saturday after Britain gave up part of its cherished EU rebate to help boost aid to poor new, east European members.

The late night deal after two days of haggling averted the threat of financial paralysis and restored some confidence after a year of setbacks marked by the rejection of the EU's first constitution by French and Dutch voters.

The breakthrough came when Britain agreed to cut its rebate by 10.5 billion euros ($12.57 billion) over seven years and raised the 2007-2013 budget to 862.3 billion euros, or 1.045 percent of EU output from 1.03 percent in an earlier proposal.

"This is about getting an agreement that allows Europe to move forward," British Prime Minister Tony Blair told a 3 a.m. news conference, stressing the deal would launch a massive shift of resources to the ex-communist newcomers.

He insisted that an agreement on a comprehensive review of all EU spending and revenue in 2008/9 created an opportunity to modernize the budget and overhaul farm subsidies which swallow 43 percent of the bloc's spending.

European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, who had sought a far bigger budget, said the EU had salvaged its public credibility with this accord. "What would be the signal to public opinion if we can't agree on a budget?" he asked.

Failure would have prevented the 10 new members from using the hefty funds available to modernize their economies and bring them into line with their wealthier western cousins.

French President Jacques Chirac hailed the compromise as "a good deal for Europe" and praised Blair's political courage in making a major gesture on reforming the rebate.

But the British leader was forced to defend himself against Eurosceptical British journalists who accused him of sacrificing billions in taxpayers' money without any guarantee that France would accept changes to farm subsidies before 2014.

"You see what I've got to deal with," he told Barroso in an aside caught on an open microphone after their news conference.

Polish Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz and several other leaders paid tribute to new German Chancellor Angela Merkel for having helped broker the deal and offering extra cash at the last minute to meet the new member states' demands. *Reuters*

Zarqawi captured, unwittingly freed

BAGHDAD—IRAQI SECURITY FORCES CAPtured al-Qaida frontman Abu Musab al-Zarqawi last year but released him because they did not know who he was, a senior Iraqi official told AFP Friday.

"He was arrested more than one year ago in Fallujah by Iraqi police," deputy interior minister Hussain Kamal said. "It seems they did not recognize him, that's why they released him."

The shadowy Jordanian-born Islamist—who only has one leg after being injured fighting for the Taliban in Afghanistan—is Iraq's most wanted man and has a $25-million US bounty on his head.

"He is human, he does not have the power of God," Kamal insisted. "We will bring him to justice."

Zarqawi, 39, is allegedly the mastermind of numerous bombings, armed attacks, hostage murders and other acts of violence in Iraq, and has been sentenced to death in Jordan for the 2002 murder of a US diplomat.

"He got away once, he will not get away the next time," Kamal told AFP. "He will be tried for the crimes he committed against the Iraqi people."

In Washington, a Pentagon spokesperson said the US military could not confirm the report.

"That was rumored a year ago and never proved to be confirmed," Bryan Whitman said.

US military forces in Iraq have claimed to have killed or captured a number of Zarqawi's top operatives and said they have come close to capturing Zarqawi himself on a number of occasions. *AFP*

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Toxic slick threatens Russia

VLADIVOSTOK, RUSSIA—A toxic slick that threatened the water supply of millions of people in China entered Russia's far eastern Amur River on Friday, but officials said the danger was under control—at least for now.

"The water polluted with benzene today reached the Russian border and has flowed into the Amur River," Emergency Situations Minister Sergei Shoigu said in the city of Khabarovsk, near the Chinese border.

This southeastern corner of Russia has been bracing for trouble ever since an explosion last month at a PetroChina chemical factory in China's Jilin province led to the spill of 100 tons of carcinogens into the Songhua River, which flows into the Amur.

Millions of residents of several large Chinese cities saw their water supplies disrupted.

However, initial tests by Russian experts showed the slick, which contains benzene and nitrobenzene, is not as highly concentrated as had been feared and is continuing to dilute, officials from the emergency situations ministry said.

Chinese media also reported that the slick had significantly diluted ahead of entering the Amur. AFP

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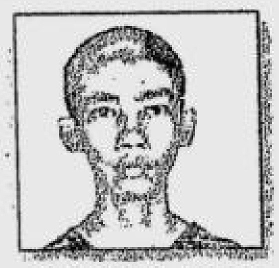
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Sleaze factor

EDITORIALS

WE DO NOT EXPECT OUR POLITICIANS TO CONduct themselves like the ideal judge; they do not take a quasi-monastic vow to steer clear of both socials and socializing. (In fact, quite a number of our judges comport themselves as if they were politicians.)

We do expect those we elect to public office, however, to adhere to stricter standards.

This reasonable expectation is why the rather ostentatious exercise of fellow-feeling put on display by Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay (and Manila Rep. Joey Hizon), who flew all the way to Detroit in the United States to escort former Manila congressman Mark Jimenez home, fills us with dismay.

Pichay has said he wanted to personally accompany Jimenez—who has just served more than two years in a US federal prison for tax fraud and illegal campaign donations—on the flight home. By all accounts, Pichay and Jimenez are fast friends. When Jimenez, then a member of Congress, was extradited to the United States three Decembers ago, Pichay accompanied him part of the way.

So the two are friends, and, in other circumstances, it would have been easy to dismiss Pichay's homecoming duty as merely something that one friend (albeit a very rich one, who can afford to buy a round-trip ticket to the United States in the middle of peak traveling season) does gladly for another (someone, not coincidentally, who is also very rich).

But Pichay is not an ordinary citizen; he is a senior member of the administration-controlled Congress. In fact, he has cast a moist eye on the speakership of the House; it is an ambition encouraged by Malacañang, or at least some members of the President's inner circle, for their own, complicated reasons.

He should act according to the higher interests of the public. While no one begrudges him his friendship with Jimenez, he must subordinate the dictates of that friendship to the public good. His going out of his way to make an old friend feel right at home discomfits a public already sick of a political culture that gives convicted but well-connected persons the royal treatment. Like former congressman Romeo Jalosjos, in prison for raping a child, Jimenez should be treated like a pariah, not like a returning hero.

But even on the much lower level of tactical political interests, Pichay should have asked someone else to render escort duty. He is, after all, the congressman who seems closest to the controversial ex-election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano. In July, when Garcillano was already in hiding, it was through Pichay that he reached out to the media. Pichay has done nothing since Garcillano's reappearance to dispel the public perception that he is indeed close to the ex-commissioner.

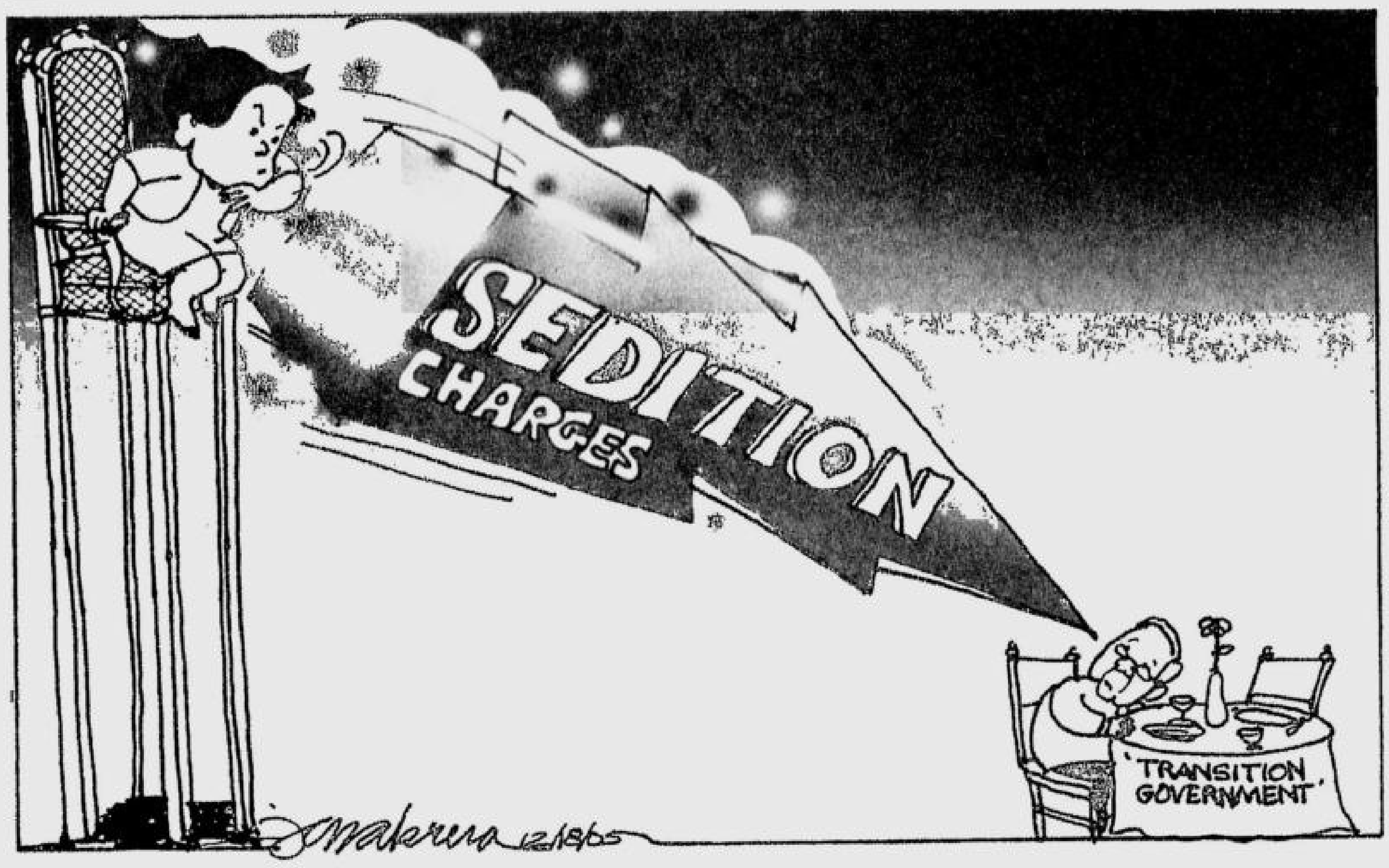
Tactically, therefore, Pichay's trip to Detroit is another stain on the administration. It reinforces the sleaze factor that seems to stick to a smooth operator like Pichay and, thus, by necessary consequence, to the President herself.

In contempt

THE DEPARTURE OF FORMER AGRICULTURE UNdersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante, just before another scheduled hearing of the Senate agriculture committee commenced, cannot simply be attributed to a conflict in schedules. In fact, it was—it could not be anything else but—a deliberate attempt to avoid testifying before the Senate.

The P728-million fertilizer fund, it has become clear, was the object of a devious scam—a "grand theft," in the language of the committee's preliminary report. Because Bolante, now the treasurer of Rotary International, was the person directly responsible for the fund, he has no option but to heed the summons of the Senate and testify in the ongoing inquiry.

He has already missed the first four hearings; now his lawyer promises he will show up for the next one, in January. We think they are both trifling with the Senate. Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., who chairs the committee investigating the scam, should press the Department of Foreign Affairs to cancel Bolante's passport. He must be flushed out and compelled to testify. Perhaps—here's a thought—Rep. Prospero Pichay would care to escort him home?



A government of laws

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

NOW THAT VIRGILIO GARCILLANO HAS FInally appeared to be questioned on the tapes that bear his infamous name, come now the big brass of the AFP who are none-too-eager to disclose who ordered the eavesdropping in the first place. There is a lot of finger-pointing among them, obviously to avoid criminal prosecution under Republic Act No. 4200 or at least the anger and possible retaliation of President Macapagal-Arroyo for their revelations.

Eavesdropping is prohibited by the Constitution except when authorized by a judge or when public safety or order may require otherwise as prescribed by law. There was no judicial order allowing the Garci conversations to be taped nor have the conditions prescribed by the said law, otherwise known as the Anti-Wiretapping Act, been satisfied.

The said statute prohibits "any person, not being authorized by all the parties to a private conversation or spoken word, to tap any wire or cable, or by using any other device or arrangement, to secretly overhear, intercept or record" the same, or to communicate the contents thereof to any person.

However, these acts may be done by a peace officer upon previous written authorization by the court, to be issued upon compliance with the constitutional requirements for the issuance of a warrant, and shall be effective for only 60 days. The use of these records is permitted only in civil or criminal proceedings involving certain specified offenses, mainly those affecting national security.

The INQUIRER reported last Sunday that the military refused to identify whoever authorized the wiretap of the alleged conversations recorded in the Garci tapes. "Let it stay as a big question mark," declared an also anonymous senior officer who mixed his metaphors and saw no need "to rock the boat" because "if we investigate, we might ourselves be burned."

Later, however, chastised by the adverse reaction to its initial stance, the AFP said it was undertaking a probe of the irregularity. But as if defending itself in advance, it added that its findings would not necessarily be made public because it was "an internal investigation."

The generals seem to think that it is discretionary for them to investigate the illegal wiretapping or simply forget it. A serious offense against the constitutional right to privacy has been committed and the military would rather ignore it like many other crimes that have conveniently remained unpunished. Its reluctance to probe the Garci tapes scandal is especially suspicious, if not downright condemnable, because the guilty party or parties are within its ranks and their exposure will further blemish the already tattered record of the AFP.

Sen. Joker P. Arroyo is disgusted by the neglect or refusal of the AFP to conduct a thorough investigation of the Garci tapes and report its findings to the Senate. He fears that the inaction on the scandal may, if not corrected, encourage the AFP to continue its clandestine eavesdropping on the activities of public officials and private citizens for its own secret purposes. This may lead to the surrender of civilian authority to the military and convert our republic into a government of generals and sergeants.

The rest of the Senate is similarly incensed and will not accept the apparent intention of the military to shield its own and protect them from criminal prosecution for violating the right of all persons to "be left alone" except in the circumstances allowed by the Constitution and the law. I hope it will spare no effort to compel the AFP to come clean and reveal the person or persons who authorized the illegal operation that could have toppled President Arroyo—if the proceedings had been squeaky clean—from her quaky perch in Malacañang.

And speaking of the President, why has she been notably silent about this national scandal? Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the matter was being investigated by the AFP and the National Police and left it at that, as if it were a minor problem undeserving Ms Arroyo's attention. Wrong, absolutely wrong, for the main subject of the Garci tapes is the President herself and her alleged falsification of her election victory last year. Could this be precisely the reason why she wants the Garci tapes to be forgotten and buried forever?

I respectfully remind President Arroyo that it is her constitutional duty to "ensure that the laws be faithfully executed." (Art. VII, Sec. 17) And that means all laws, including those that she would rather not enforce for personal and other reasons. Let me add that the Constitution makes her "the Commander-in-Chief of all armed forces of the Philippines" (Ibid, Sec. 18) that she should **command** to seriously investigate the Garci tapes scandal and let the chips fall where they may. Her failure to do these obligatory acts is a serious dereliction of duty that can be another ground for her impeachment next year.

Ours is supposed to be a government of laws and not of men—and also women. The laws should especially apply to President Arroyo and the AFP she does not choose to command.

Tenacity and holding on to God's will

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THE STORY IS TOLD ABOUT A MOTHER WHO told her little girl: "No matter what happens, hold on to my skirt so that you won't get lost in the mall." "Yes Mommy" was the little girl's reply. There were so many people doing their last-minute Christmas shopping, and true enough, the little girl held on, and held on tight. Two hours later, there was an announcement: "Calling on the parents or guardians of a lost little girl wearing a blue dress and tenaciously holding on to a red skirt."

* * *

In today's Gospel (Lk. 1, 26-38), we hear of Mary's tenacity and of her obedience to God's will in spite of her fears and uncertainties. She was going to have a child without having an affair with any man. Furthermore, her cousin Elizabeth, who was barren, had conceived in her old age and was already in her sixth month. Impossible! But that precisely was the Angel Gabriel's message to her, and to us: "For nothing will be impossible for God."

* * *

In the recently concluded TV show "Pinoy Big Brother," housemate Nene Tamayo came out the winner. This simple 24-year-old girl from Romblon rose above the rest because of her determination and obedience to the instructions of Big Brother. There were housemates who were more vocal, more eloquent, more talented, more good-looking, but in the end, it was a simple, determined, obedient girl who won. Doesn't Nene remind us of Mary in many ways?

Obey God, and you'll be happy. Disobey God in sin and you will regret it in so many ways.

* * *

I can't help but remember my father who would have been 84 years old today. Life was hard when we were growing up in Bani, Pangasinan, but he always told us, his children, to study well, work hard and pray much, and we would be successful someday. He brought us up with loads of honest and hard work, and he told us that all he could give us was education, and a good name. He was a man who believed in God, and who believed in good work, honesty and lots of love.

* * *

From time to time, we hear of people who tenaciously hold on to their values and principles in spite of the lures of money, power and pleasures. More often than not, they are thought of as foolish in the eyes of the world. However, they are not foolish in the eyes of God. Blessed are they who hold on to their goodness in a culture where cheating, lying and stealing are almost becoming a lifestyle. "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God." These words are also addressed today to those people who hold on to goodness.

* * *

On the other hand, there are those who tenaciously hold on to power, money, pleasures and lies. To them, the opposite message is given today: "You better be afraid, for you have not found favor with God!"

* * *

It is the season for giving gifts. Fr. John O'Mahony, SVD cautions us about "recycling" gifts, and he uses, as an example, the fruit cake which we often pass on as a gift to other people by simply changing the card attached to it. Father John challenges us to give whatever excess or whatever we don't use to charitable institutions, hospitals, orphanages, and not just recycle them for "exchange gifts." On a deeper level, we must stop our "recycled spirituality" with which we go back to our old ways soon after the Christmas season is gone.

* * *

By the way, do you have a memorial life plan? Have you made a decision as to whether you will be cremated or not? How many days have you set aside for your wake? Have you thought of the people whom you would like or would not like to be at your funeral? Such morbid thoughts at Christmas? I am asking these questions not because I am an agent of a memorial life company. I am asking the questions because I want to raise these other questions: Do you have an eternal life plan? Do you plan to go to heaven? If so, then, obey God's will. Do not postpone your conversion. Do not postpone your loving. The time to love is now.

* * *

Congratulations to the Philippine Daily Inquirer. "INQREDIBLE at 20." May I add: CREDIBLE at 20. May this paper continue to do its mission for our country and for our people by continuing its prophetic role of giving "balanced news and fearless views."

* * *

Calling all the alumni of St. Augustine Seminary of Calapan, Oriental Mindoro. Please get in touch with Fr. Andy Lubi for your Alumni Homecoming on Dec. 30, 2005 (0928-3769132/043-2883020).

* * *

As part of our effort to reach out to as many people as possible, we are now on mobile ministry through text messaging. Text FJREQ <name> <your prayer request> to Globe 2948, and to Smart 394. Yes, let God's Words spread far and wide!

* * *

Wishing you all a truly blessed, peaceful and meaningful Christmas! May you experience a heart that has reconciled with God, overflowing with peace, love and hope to people around! May God bless our country the Philippines, especially this Christmas.

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, help me to hold on to your will, no matter what, no matter where. Amen.

Mabuhay si Capt. Nicanor Faeldon!

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES HAS branded Marine Captain Nicanor Faeldon as an "enemy of the State." What a silly statement! The last time I came across this phrase was when communist insurgents used it to rationalize the execution of some of their victims. Whoever is behind this declaration is either hallucinating or completely out of touch with reality, and he is the greatest ass-licker in the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Actually, the real enemies of our people today are walking in the corridors of power, laughing their heads off, courtesy of characters like Virgilio Garcillano, Joc-Joc Bolante, Benjamin Abalos and company.

Captain Faeldon is one of several junior officers involved in the Oakwood mutiny of July 2003. The young officers were airing their grievances which succeeding events proved accurate and well-founded. Unfortunately, they were cradling high-powered weapons while making known their complaints about the system. But if one thinks about it, how best can you highlight needed reforms in the Armed Forces except by drastic measures? Talk, talk, talk, usually gets us nowhere. At any rate, after negotiations for their return to barracks were successfully concluded, the government turned around and threw out the conditions agreed upon by the negotiators and the mutineers. Whatever happened to the recommendations of the Feliciano Commission which investigated the mutiny? Like the earlier Davide Report, not much seems to have resulted from the hearings. All we have to do is bring out both reports and check the findings and recommendations against the actions taken to see if we have made any progress.

Faeldon was born on July 29, 1965 in the province of Batanes. After a degree in political science at the National University, he took up the Navy Officers' Qualification Course in 1990. He was called to active duty in January 1992. He then attended the Marine Officers' Basic Course, became airborne-qualified and attended the Force Recon Course which is the Marine equivalent of Special Forces training. At the time of the Oakwood incident, he was serving as an ordnance course director in ammunition management at the Marine Training Center in Ternate, Cavite. You can see that he is highly trained for combat. In a CD-recorded message released after his escape, he stated that he was leaving "to join the fight for a credible government." He is the second mutineer to escape from detention. The first was 2nd Lt. Junnibert Tubo, also with the Marines.

As usual, the military announced a "nationwide manhunt" for Faeldon but if—as AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga says—the AFP has no wiretapping capability, how can the military hope to monitor or track down Faeldon as well as other "enemies of the State"? For that matter, how can it track down terrorists bent on carrying out bombing missions if it doesn't have such basic tools as wiretapping devices? Someone is fooling the Filipino people and, sooner or later, the truth will be revealed. Remember, it is the cover-ups that get people into real trouble. In the Watergate scandal, it was the cover-up, not the break-in by political operatives, which brought down the Nixon presidency.

But going back to Captain Faeldon and his other colleagues still in detention, I wish them all more strength, perseverance and determination in their efforts to bring about a better armed forces, a better society for all Filipinos. Their time will come. Of this, I have no doubts. Mabuhay si Captain Faeldon!

* * *

On Wednesday, Dec. 21, the AFP will mark its 70th anniversary. This year, the theme of the celebrations is "Kalasag ng Sambayanan!" It won't be the usual parade and review. Instead, the ceremonies will be held indoors at the Tejeros Hall of the AFP Commissioned Officers Club in Camp Aguinaldo. I understand there will be awards and decorations to be handed out by the commander in chief; and, possibly, the newly appointed generals and flag officers might take their oath of office.

It was on Dec. 21, 1935 that President Manuel L. Quezon signed the National Defense Act creating the Philippine Army. It was the first Act passed by the National Assembly of the Philippine Commonwealth—the result of fierce debates on the floor which at times turned personal. In his book, "The Philippine Army, 1935-1942," historian Ricardo Trota Jose, mentions that the principal—and almost lone—dissenter to the bill was Camilo Osias of the first district of La Union. Osias favored developing education and called the bill too extravagant for the country. He believed that the presence of US military forces in the country was sufficient for defense purposes. He also felt that a military caste system would result from the creation of an armed force.

The supporters of the bill led by Claudio Sandoval, Maximo Kalaw and Tomas Confesor outnumbered the opponents and the bill was passed just before midnight of Dec. 20.

The first chief of staff was Jose Delos Reyes, with the rank of brigadier general. Brig. Gen. Basilio Valdes, who was Chief of Constabulary, was appointed first assistant chief of staff, while Col. Guillermo Francisco, another Constabulary officer, was named second assistant chief of staff. The Philippine Constabulary (PC) would serve as the nucleus of the new Philippine Army, with the PC's two top men absorbed into the new organization.

Today, we have an Armed Forces consisting of the Air Force, the Army and the Navy under the Department of National Defense. The old Constabulary, now the Philippine National Police, is a separate organization under the Department of Interior and Local Government.

Buns on the run

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

DURING MY HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR YEAR FOUR YEARS ago, the graduation ball was the most awaited event. It was held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the gym. The girls wore their most stunning outfits and danced under the flash and glitter of strobe lights. In the spirit of chastity and simplicity, boys (those evil creatures) were banned from attending. It was a unique experience, which is another way of saying I now have a pretty good idea of what a gay bar looks like.

Needless to say, when I first stood on the steps of AS (Arts and Science) hall to watch the Oblation Run, I knew as much about the male anatomy as I did about Kirkegaard and Heidegger's philosophies. Which was nothing other than the spelling. The University of the Philippines soon cured me of my inexperience.

Every year, at the beginning of Christmas break, a grand tradition brings the opposing forces of UP together in the spirit of freedom, self-expression and sheer, unadulterated glee. We call it the Oblation Run.

The Oblation that stands at the end of the University Avenue—a statue of a naked man with his arms thrust to the sky—represents the freedom of expression that characterizes UP. The Oblation Run celebrates the same value, and has young men literally shedding the trappings of traditional society. In other words, members of the Alpha Phi Omega fraternity run buck naked through the corridors of AS Hall.

The Oblation Run serves to bring publicity to the causes APO espouses. This year, they are fighting for a higher budget for education. As the flyer that was thrust into my hand said,

"...and so we of this Greek lettered fraternity,
seeing that the weak wallow in mediocrity,
and that the meek fade into obscurity,
therefore choose to seek a path towards notoriety."

The path, so to speak, began at Quezon Hall, where 20 young men paraded naked before a cheering crowd.

As a veteran of the Oblation Run, my reaction wasn't as shocked as the one I had when I was 16. Back then, when I found myself inches away from glistening male flesh and bouncing objects, I clutched at my friend's arm and nervously asked: "Uh, JJ...are you sure they're supposed to have hair?"

Last Friday, AS (Palma Hall to the uninitiated) was packed to the very rafters. *Isko* and *iska* stood elbow to sticky elbow with Miriamite, Atenean and the occasional blond Lithuanian. The atmosphere smelled of sweat, tension and—from the vantage point of my little square of space—looked about to explode into hysteria. The corridors at both ends were lined four-deep with humanity, all with furrowed brows and straining eyes.

Then someone screamed, the thrilled, high-pitched shriek of someone who had just glimpsed the future father of her children. Suddenly, everyone from that corner began to shriek, and people across the hall craned necks and pressed forward. Cameramen raced down the aisle. Then the cries died down. False alarm.

Outside, three women in their 40s stood with umbrellas open. They said that they had children studying in UP, and had come to watch the Oblation Run.

"You mean your sons are running?" I asked one.

"No, no. My daughter is in her freshman year, she refuses to watch. She's too conservative."

At the front lines, friends stood with elbows linked or hands clasped, protecting their space and unwilling to be separated. Girls were dressed in their stylish best, flipping long hair and giggling over the proceedings. To one side, a group of green-and-white clad Miriam students huddled. All freshmen, they claimed to be "oblation virgins."

Suddenly, there were shrieks from the far end of the hall—this time, they didn't stop.

I was jammed behind a 5'7", heavily muscled boy and a bouncing girl wearing a handkerchief that was masquerading as a skirt. Despite heels and persistent wrestling in the crowd, I saw nothing. Nada, nil, nothing—no more than bare shoulders, banners held high and masked heads.

I admit disappointment. After all, who knows—the male anatomy must have changed in the last few years. I wouldn't want to risk flunking Biology.

Later, I crashed headlong into an old high school teacher. Currently taking up her master's in UP while teaching in Kester College, she had brought her students to "feel the tradition of UP." After glancing at the bright-eyed, eager faces, I told them that the show was over.

Then all of a sudden, a wave of excitement crashed over the hall. "They're coming back, they're coming back, they're coming back," mumbled the guy behind me.

My old teacher and I found ourselves at the front row. We looked at each other, clasped hands, held tight and stood our ground. By the time the leaping mass of masculinity came barreling through, the crowd at the other end was still scattered—forcing the gentlemen in front of us to pause in their running and wait for space to clear.

One masked man, clutching red roses, hopped impatiently from foot to foot half a meter away from me. Then he looked down and suddenly seemed to realize he was naked. His hands flashed to cover himself, then just as suddenly pulled back.

The girl beside me started shrieking "Gross, oh my God, it's so gross!" all the while shoving a sharp elbow into my stomach to angle for a better look. The boys jogged and waved, turning in circles and handing out roses to girls. Strange as it is to receive a flower from a naked masked man, tradition calls it a compliment. My thanks to the gentleman who gallantly handed over his rose to an eager lass in blue—it's something I can brag about to my kids when I'm old and senile.

"Ma'am, ma'am, thank you for bringing us here!" A Kester girl said gratefully. "Life-changing," declared one Political Science freshman. "I feel like a woman!"

The jury's still out on whether the people noticed the cause more than the naked men—but at the very least, the cause is out on newspapers and television.

As the poem in their flyer concluded:

"For though we wreak havoc to conventionality
Nonetheless we speak with steadfast dignity
That while others peek at our naked masculinity
We bullheadedly streak towards fabled history."

* * *

Send comments to pat.evangelista@gmail.com

The world of 'Narnia'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A NEW MOVIE FRANCHISE IS BORN WITH "THE Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," which opened in theaters worldwide last week. However, the movie will be shown in local movie houses early next year yet, to give way to the Metro Manila Film Festival.

"Narnia" the movie is in many ways a film meant for a Christmas release. It is filled with all the elements of holiday entertainment: luscious visual treats, stirring music, sprawling action, and a theme replete with religious overtones and mystic aspirations.

And like its predecessors—"The Lord of the Rings" and "Harry Potter"—"Narnia" has a built-in loyal audience: readers who are currently engrossed in or who grew up with the seven books in the "Chronicles" written by C.S. Lewis. "This is a movie I have been waiting for since I was in Grade 5!" exclaimed my daughter, now 19, who first became acquainted with the Pevensie children of the "Narnia" Chronicles when we gifted her with a boxed set of the seven "Narnia" books one Christmas.

For some reason, I hadn't had the chance to read any of the "Narnia" books, either in childhood or later on. I guess it was because I went straight from Nancy Drew to Mills and Boon in my juvenile reading list. But being a "Narnia" virgin at least allowed me to watch the movie with fresh eyes. Unlike my daughter, for instance, who constantly worried about how "faithful" the movie would be to the text, and then wondered if she would not be bored by a movie that hewed too closely to the familiar storyline.

But at the end of the preview, we were both enthused and fascinated. "The Chronicles of Narnia" did not disappoint. There were lots of cinematic wonders, rich psychological insights, and even theological analogies. Talk about a filling movie experience! So moved was my daughter that she immediately set out to re-read the books, only to discover with some dismay that her beloved "Narnia Chronicles" were too juvenile for her current taste in books.

* * *

"THE LION, the Witch and the Wardrobe" is the first of the Narnia Chronicles to be published, although it comes about midway in the entire Narnia chronology.

It tells the story of the four Pevensie children: Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy, who are sent to the English countryside to live with an eccentric professor as part of a massive exodus of children out of World War II London besieged by the blitz. It is Lucy, plucky and curious, who "discovers" Narnia as she stumbles backward through a huge wardrobe into the wintry landscape of the kingdom. The four siblings soon find that they are more than just visitors to Narnia. As bearers of the "blood of Adam" and the "blood of Eve," they embody the promise of a great prophecy in which four human children save Narnia from the long winter inflicted on the once-lush land by Jadis, the White Witch.

The children also get to meet Aslan, the heroic lion who leads the rebellion against Jadis and presides over an army composed of fantasy creatures and animals that talk, including centaurs, unicorns, elves and fairies.

The road to the victory of the righteous over evil is far from smooth, however. A major roadblock is the "treachery" of Edmund, the younger Pevensie brother, whose resentment of his older brother's authority leads him to fall under Jadis' spell.

* * *

ONE of the most discussed aspects of "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" is its theological overtones, especially in the "resurrection" scene of Aslan, replete with the presence of two women (Susan and Lucy) at the scene, the destruction of the stone altar, and the tremors that attended the event. Allusions to the Bible cannot but occur to the viewer, which is only to be expected since Lewis was part of a group of "Catholic" writers in Oxford (which included JRR Tolkien, which should put all those fears of "heresy" in LOTR to rest) who desired to incorporate questions of faith into contemporary myths.

But the theological dimension of "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" goes far beyond an allegory of the Resurrection. The theme of the book, after all, follows the thread of most heroic quests: the power of the innocent to overcome the darkest evil. The movie is rich with stirrings of hope and optimism, and with insights into the complex bonds among siblings, friends and questors.

The book—and the movie—no doubt serve to empower young readers and children in the audience, giving them a sense of their own power if only they would believe in themselves and the talents that lie yet untapped in their minds and hearts.

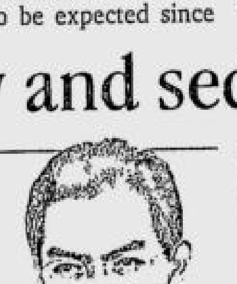
* * *

IT helps, of course, that the young talents playing the Pevensie siblings lend their characters likeability and youthful dignity. I was especially taken up with Georgie Henly, who plays the plucky Lucy, but whom I had noticed in previous movie roles. Skandar Keynes, as the rebellious Edmund, likewise makes his mark in the movie.

Tilda Swinton, who portrayed an Archangel with a dark side in "Constantine," once again explores her villainous persona as Jadis. She is truly frightful in the film, with her pale complexion and dead, black shark's eyes. One can imagine how Edmund must have felt staring into those expressionless orbs, cold and seemingly bottomless.

What makes "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" all the more remarkable is that it was directed by Andrew Anderson, whose previous work was the CGI-powered animation film "Shrek" and its sequel, "Shrek 2." Who would have thought that a feature animation director would have the depth of feeling and insight for a film so rich in emotion and meaning? Come to think of it, this "Narnia" film would also be so fitting a film to start a new year with—Lord knows we need all the hope, courage and inspiration we can find these days!

Between senility and sedition



PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

THE SECRETARY OF JUSTICE, WHO IS HIMSELF no longer young, first called the defiant 80-year-old retired general "senile" and in need of a psychiatrist. On second thought, he labeled him dangerous, and his declaration of a transitional government "an incitement to sedition." He sent policemen in civilian clothes to effect a "citizen's arrest." In custody, the old man and his comrades were subsequently charged with inciting to sedition.

It is not difficult to see whose faculties have been failing here. I do not know retired Gen. Fortunato Abat personally, but though he may seem politically naïve, his behavior does not strike me as senile, psychotic, or seditious.

Many of my best friends are old, but their minds and hearts continue to pulsate with life. Senility is a fact of life. We all die a little every day—some faster than others. The present government is full of people with decayed moral faculties, who, at a relatively young age, can no longer think properly.

My old friends may be senescent but they remain sentient, i.e., conscious and capable of responsive behavior. All over the world, many senior citizens continue to act as sentinels of the societies they helped shape. The word "seneschal"—old steward—might have been invented for them. It fits at least three active people in their mid-80s I personally know and admire—former Sen. Jovito Salonga, former Ambassador Bienvenido Tan, and Letizia Constantino, my mother-in-law. The original concept of the Senate was of a deliberative body filled with such venerable and wise human beings.

Individuals who do not allow old age to interfere with their ideals and passions will always be perceived as somehow out of place in societies with young but politically inert populations. Their earnestness typically invites amusement, ridicule, and even outright disapproval. Their activism makes exhausted publics feel vague and uneasy.

The general owes us no explanation for his actions. He has articulated a solution to the nation's problems that is arguable. He says, correctly, that we have a President that the majority of our people can no longer respect, and whose moral fitness as the nation's highest leader is in grave doubt. The institutional mechanisms by which these doubts would have been resolved were rigged and not allowed to properly function. The only thing left is to demand her resignation. General Abat echoes a pervasive sentiment—that the problem we face is not just Ms Arroyo, it is the whole political class. He sees the present composition of Congress as equally problematic, and so he proposes to close it down. Not many Filipinos would disagree with that. He suggests a transition period in which to repair our basic institutions. That too sounds logical.

Where the general possibly erred was in believing that by simply calling a press conference and announcing the formation of a "transition government" to be led by him, he would be able to mobilize the people's disaffection and spontaneously trigger the military's defection. Still, that expectation is not as absurd as it may seem. We have the two Edsas to prove its feasibility.

Edsa I was a necessary act of sedition against a corrupt dictatorship. Edsa II was no less seditious in that it installed a new president even while the duly elected one was still in Malacañang. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo owes her presidency to the seditious acts of thousands of young people who marched to Edsa to protest the concealment of the truth at the impeachment trial of Joseph Estrada, as well as to the military commanders who openly declared their withdrawal of allegiance to the incumbent president. So thin indeed is the line separating sedition from the quest for an accountable government that this crime ought to be consigned to the archives of the American occupation in the Philippines, rather than it be used as a weapon against political dissenters.

What General Abat may have overlooked is the slow painstaking behind-the-scenes organizing and leveling work and dialogues that preceded both popular uprisings. He may have been looking only at the gravity of the Arroyo presidency's crimes, which clearly outweigh the many lapses in judgment committed by Erap against the public interest. What the general has failed to take into account is the reluctance of the people to act on their disenchantment and outrage against the regime. This is what we need to understand.

General Abat has done his work; it is up to us to decide whether his failure should also close the book on the struggle to bring down an illegitimate presidency. It is our turn to account for our own failure to respond to the scandal of an unworthy leader.

After staging two successful people power uprisings that did not amount to any enduring improvement in our system of governance, our young people now appear to be in a severe political depression. They have become suspicious and cynical of everything that sounds or looks political. They detest the present government and what it is doing, but they are repelled even more by the traditional politicians who are waiting to take over.

To the young people's rejection of politics, which rationalizes their cynicism, there is a need to contrapose a redefinition of politics in a democracy. Our hopes for a stable, orderly and peaceful society must not breed intolerance for debate and dissent. If we are to avoid the seduction of dictatorship, or the antagonistic politics of communal identities based on ethnicity and religion, we have no choice but to patiently find our way through the paradoxes of democracy.

* * *

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

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Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

Asean's common bond

THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN)—BRUNEI, CAMbodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam—is a region of 530 million people and a combined economy of more than $1.4 trillion.

Last week, 10 Southeast Asian leaders gathered in Kuala Lumpur for their annual meeting. After the meeting, Asean hosted the first East Asia Summit on Dec. 14, which sought to forge greater economic integration with China and India—two countries whose combined economic output is expected to surpass that of the United States by 2050.

The summit put Asean together not only with China and India but also with Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. The 16 nations account for half the world's population and a combined economy of $8.3 trillion.

One area where Asean is making progress is trade. The association has agreed to establish by 2020 the Asean Economic Community, a single market where goods, services and investments would flow freely.

A survey initiated by The Straits Times of Singapore together with five members of the Asia News Network (ANN), a group of 14 newspapers, showed other areas where there could be room for greater cooperation in Asean.

The Straits Times, The Star (Malaysia), The Nation (Thailand), The Jakarta Post (Indonesia), Philippine Daily Inquirer, and Vietnam News polled over a thousand English-speaking, urban respondents in face-to-face interviews, via e-mail and over the phone from October to November. The poll covered 1,147 respondents.

Sixty percent of the respondents said people in Asean identify with one another.

Quest for identity

By **Isagani Yambot** in Manila, **Shefali Rekhi** in Singapore, **Yasmin Lee Arpon** in Bangkok, **Nick Leong** in Kuala Lumpur, **Novan Imam Santosa** in Jakarta **and Diem Quynh Pham** in Hanoi

SETTING ASIDE SHEAFS OF PAPER, K. Kesavapany picks up the results of the Straits Times-Asia News Network Asiapoll and begins to ponder.

The director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Iseas) in Singapore has long followed Asean's quest for a regional identity and integration and has spearheaded efforts in recent weeks to contribute to the debate.

Minutes pass by in silence.

Then he looks up, throws back his head and says: "Thirty-eight years have gone by but we haven't crossed the bridge."

Circling some of the findings, he remarks: "I am pleasantly surprised that 60 percent of those polled feel they identify with others in Asean.

"But my own feeling is that this consciousness is there among the ruling elite in capital cities. Much more needs to be done to integrate the places elsewhere."

The sentiment echoes through in the poll.

Philippine-based researcher Minerva Generalao said policymakers should question the notion that people have of Asean identity, to be able to build on it.

Diverse

"Asean is so diverse. There are so many barriers—historical, linguistic, cultural, religious—to a common identity. So is the notion of identity the same and common for the respondents?"

In Vietnam, Nguyen Thi Gam Huong, a 23-year-old program administrator with a nonprofit organization told ANN's member-partner Vietnam News: "I know very little about Asean countries like the Philippines and Brunei," though Vietnam became a member a decade ago.

Asean's quest for a regional identity and integration gained momentum in the mid-90s when Vietnam, Laos and Burma (Myanmar) joined the grouping, but the reality is that it is still far from being closely knit.

The framing of the Asean Vision 2020 document at the December 1997 summit in Kuala Lumpur sought to give it another push.

The Singapore-conceived Initiative for Asean Integration was taken up under which a series of projects were started to bring countries in the region closer together.

Curriculum

Alongside knowledge about Asean was included in the primary school curriculum.

All this led to greater consciousness about the common identity and there is now far greater mobility within the region.

Cross-border tie-ups are increasing by the day.

There is also now greater realization that fortunes of the countries in this region are interlinked.

The spread of the SARS virus, terrorism, the wrath of the tsunami and now fears about damage that an outbreak of bird flu can cause have driven home that point.

Consequently, governments are now signing pacts on defense as well.

But Asean remains far from integrated, with wide disparities still at the level of economic development.

Besides, close to four decades after the grouping was established the network still has to frame its own charter.

Asean managed its affairs with a minimum of formality, with few legally binding arrangements and with relatively weak regional institutions, said Rodolfo Severino, Asean's former secretary general, in an Iseas-produced booklet "Framing the Asean Charter."

There is hence still no criteria for membership other than location in Southeast Asia and adherence to some general principles of international behavior.

Most Asean agreements, even those that are technically binding have been dependent on the voluntary compliance of member states and the Asean Secretariat.

"The closest thing that the association has to an executive, remains weak in terms of formal powers," Severino said.

Single market

But in recent years, Asean countries have doubled their efforts to integrate the region economically. At the Bali summit in 2003, Asean leaders agreed to establish the Asean Economic Community by 2020.

This is envisaged to be a single market and production base where there would be free flow of goods, services, investments etc.

The importance of achieving this is lost on few people—it would enable businesses to opt for economies of scale making the region a magnet for foreign direct investments.

With globalization the mantra now, it would be the way to thrive.

"Asean came together as a group to have political leverage over outsiders," said Asda Jayanam, the former Thai ambassador to the United Nations.

"But there is no threat from outsiders, except perhaps globalization—we need to work together to have a common system," he told The Nation, Thailand's daily newspaper and an ANN member.

Achieving this, however, will mean making many policy changes and a change in mindset, though for the moment that seems difficult.

Departure tax

Indonesia's Makmur Keliat, the executive director of the Center for East Asian Cooperation at the University of Indonesia, points out that despite all the talk about integration, Jakarta imposes a "departure tax" of Rp 1 million ($100) on Indonesian citizens.

"Actually, other Asean governments have appealed to us to revoke this strange policy because it limits the movement of Indonesians to visit other Asean countries," he told The Jakarta Post, ANN's Indonesia partner.

Another key issue to be tackled will be the fear of losing national identities, but Jayum Javan, a Universiti Putra Malaysia political science lecturer, believes it will work to a nation's advantage.

"In fact, it will further enhance it," he told Malaysia's leading daily, The Star.

"In Europe, Germans, Austrians, Italians, and Greeks for example, are more eager to distinguish themselves from one another after the union," he said.

It will be especially good for tourism as well, he added.

The debate now is about the pace at which the integration should progress. The people believe it should be hastened but the intellectuals still worry.

Malaysian political scientist Nidzam Sulaiman believes the process should be gradual to minimize shocks.

"Asean countries should be allowed to move at the pace they want. That is what regional cooperation is all about," he said.

Others argue, given the realities of globalization, maybe a two-track approach should be followed—those more developed can hasten their integration, and the rest can follow, at their own pace.

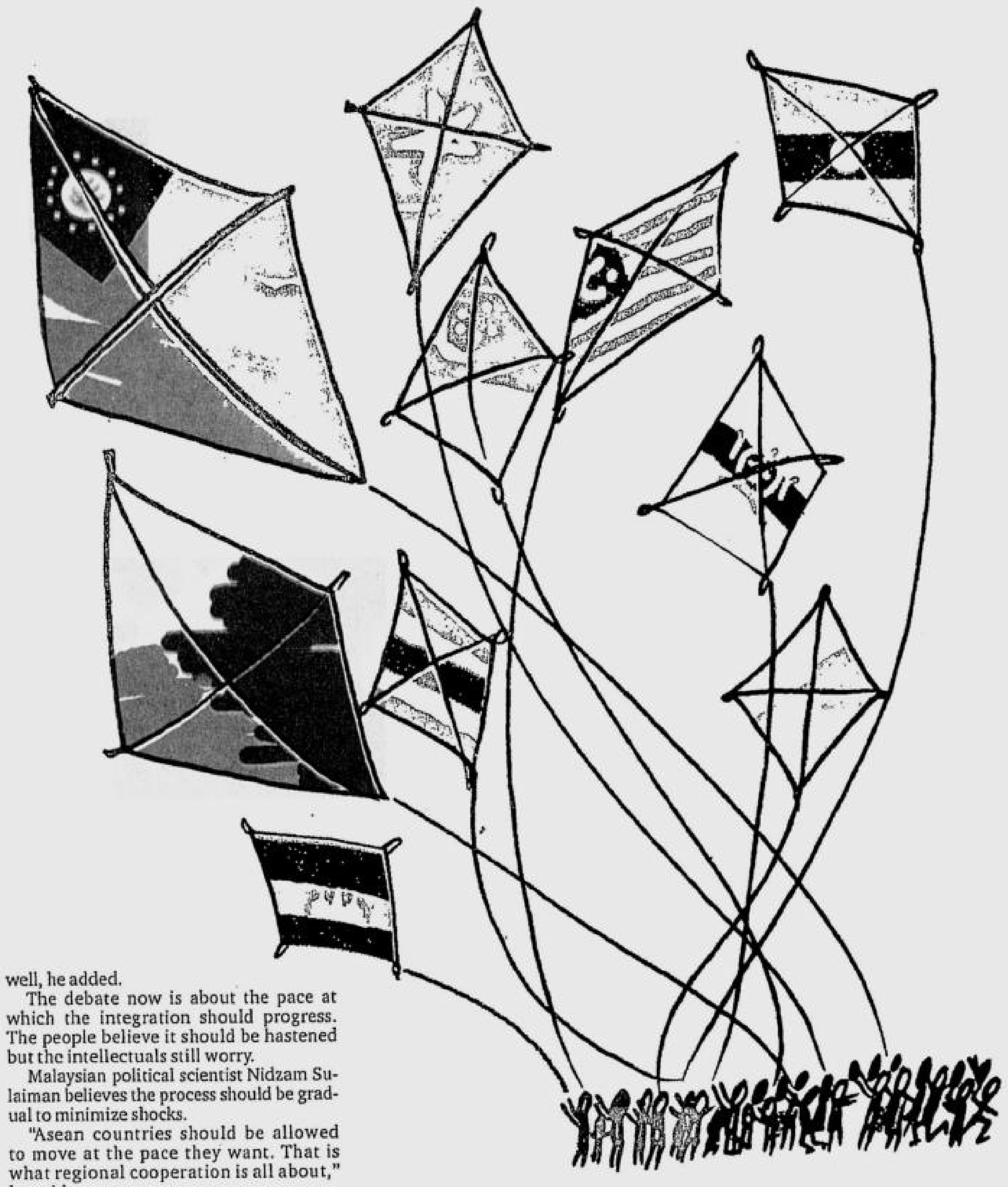
Potential

The potential for cooperation remains immense.

"If at all progress has been made, it is only in the area of trade and even then not all countries have kept to their commitments," said Kesavapany.

In other areas, such as services, particularly financial, there is little progress to record and in the area of transport, the proposal for an open skies agreement in Asean has long been pending.

"Asean countries also have to agree on a set of core values so that everyone knows what the grouping stands for. I am afraid that a lot more work needs to be done before one can, with all honesty, say that Asean integration is well and truly in place," he told the Straits Times, calling for more debate.



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Asia News Network Asiapoll

1) Do people in Asean identify with one another?
Yes (60.3 percent); No (35.5); No response (4.2)

2) Is the pace of Asean integration?
Too slow (45.4); too fast (2.6); just right (36.5); makes no difference (15.5)

3) Do you plan to visit another Asean country in the next six months?
Yes (43.4); No (52.6);
No response (4)

4) Would you prefer to work in a non-Asean country?
Yes (69.5); No/others (30.5)

5) Would you encourage your children to study in an Asean country?
Yes (57.2); No/others (42.8)
* (Results from Singapore not included)

6) Do you have investments in another Asean country?
Yes (11.8); No/others (88.2)

7) Would you be willing to invest in another Asean country?
Yes (48.8); No (51.2)

8) Should Asean have a common currency?
Yes (45.1); No (37.9);
Not sure (17)

Unity within

By Shefali Rekhi

A REGION-WIDE POLL HAS FOUND that Asean's citizens and residents believe they share a common identity and want the pace of integration speeded up.

Six out of 10 of those polled said that people in Asean identified with one another.

Just over half said they could speak the language of another Asean country.

Study in another country

Close to half—or 44 percent—said they have been travelling within the region, and about an equal number said they expect to do so within the next six months.

Five out of 10 said they would be willing to invest in an another country, while six out of 10 (excluding Singapore) said they would encourage their children to go to school in an Asean neighbor.

Asked if Asean should have a common currency, nearly half—45 percent—backed the idea, despite the wide economic disparities among Asean members. About 38 percent rejected the idea, while the rest were undecided.

One thing on which there was general agreement: integration is moving too slowly. Nearly half of those polled thought so, with a third saying the pace was just right. Just 2.6 percent felt things were moving too fast.

"The results are an eye-opener," Asean's former secretary general Rodolfo Severino told The Straits Times (ST).

"The people are clearly ahead of the government. While leaders and officials are still debating the Asean identity issue, people-to-people links have grown strong over the years.

Reposition

"We need to look at the findings closely. There is much you can do when there is this kind of consciousness about the region."

The findings point to a willingness on the part of the people to accept a closer integration of their economies and societies, which some of Asean's leaders have been calling for.

The rise of China and India has given greater impetus to do so, as Asean will need to "reposition" itself to play a role in a changing world, argued Singapore's Foreign Minister George Yeo in September.

Closer integration would enable the region to face the challenges ahead, he said.

Singaporeans skeptical

Asean cooperation is also a theme that is likely to feature in talks among leaders, officials and commentators meet for the inaugural East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur (the summit was held on Wednesday.).

Ironically, the survey found Singaporeans to be the laggards when it comes to willingness to integrate.

Ever the pragmatists, Singaporeans were generally more skeptical about Asean integration than their counterparts in the region.

Six out of 10 Singaporeans—the highest of all members—felt that Asean countries did not identify with each other. Seven out of 10 Singaporeans were against the idea of a common currency for Asean members.

Only 21 percent were willing to invest in another Asean country.

"The difference in results is not very surprising," said Dr. Leo Suryadinata, a senior research fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

"The republic is a very urban city-state, most-developed and ahead of everybody in the region. So you can expect the views of people here to be different."

Property

Poll results also pointed to areas where there was room for greater cooperation across the region.

While 48 percent said they would be willing to invest in another Asean country, just 11 percent said they had actually done so.

Property and shares were the two preferred areas of investments among Asean neighbors.

Asked where they would chose to live or work if they could do so abroad, most of those polled cited Europe as their top choice, followed by another Asean country, or the United States.

Top destination

Among Asean countries, Thailand was the top destination for a visit, followed by Singapore.

Summing up the findings, Suryadinata said: "It is time people in Asean realized that there will be economic benefits as well as political and security ones, if the region is integrated.

"It will be more stable and allow Asean to compete with another region. On its own, it will be difficult for the region to face globalization."

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INQUIRER Mindanao

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Nico A. Alconaba**

Christmas builds peace in Christian-Muslim areas

By Nash B. Maulana
Cotabato City

CHRISTMAS SEASONS bridge peace and understanding in communities where Christians and Muslims coexist.

Thanks to the late educators Matabai Plang, Gani Abpi and Sen. Domocao Alonto Sr. and the late missionaries, then Bishop R. Smith, Bishop Gerard Mongeau and Irish nun Paticia Marie Callan. Decades ago, they introduced education that was open to liberal views on religions, and which Muslims and Christians welcomed.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) established Catholic schools that accepted even Muslim children who, very unlikely, learned elementary Arabic and Islamic prayers at an early age in subjects taught by an *ustadz* or *imam* (Muslim cleric).

One journalist says his children are fast learning how to read and write in Arabic in the Catholic-run Notre Dame University's Elementary Training Department.

Currently, the truce between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is not only holding but also tells of the good news of successful joint military-rebel operations that reunited victims of kidnap gangs with their families for a joyous Yuletide season.

The holiday festivities also bring jubilation to Muslims and Christians in Cotabato City, as well as in Datu Piang, Maguindanao and Pikit, North Cotabato, where the Muslims are the majority, and in Kabacan, North Cotabato and Esperanza and Isulan towns in Sultan Kudarat, where the Christian-Muslim population ratio is nearly one to one.

Ramadan and Christmas bonuses have been granted to government employees in Sultan Kudarat by Gov. Pax Mangudadatu and to employees in some offices of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao by Gov. Zaldy Uy Ampatuan.

But coexistence has had its share of divide. For instance, it had been put to test in Cotabato City during the last three local elections that had polarized Christian and Muslim residents into contesting votes for candidates for councilors, or had votes mixed for Ludovico Badoy, Virgilio Leyretana, Estrelita Juliano and Muslimin Sema, the city's first Muslim mayor since Mando Sinsuat Sr. lost to Teodoro Juliano in 1971.

One observer says the city government has built better makeshift stalls for a Christmas trade fair than the ones it had in Ramadan in October. But the Yuletide crowd is drawn heavily into the Immaculate Conception Cathedral Compound, center of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

It will take another 10 years for the Ramadan to fall again in December since 2001.

Glad tidings

When the dictator Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1972, Christian and Chinese-Filipino residents of Datu Piang would intercede to military commanders to ease on curfew hours so that Muslims could go out at night to attend Ramadan prayers in the mosques.

There was not a hint of religious-based animosity then.

Ustadz Nasser Ebus explained in a 1976 Friday prayer in Datu Piang the Yuletide from the viewpoint of scholars interpreting the Koran's Suratul Mariam (The Verse on the Virgin Mary), which narrates how God's Angel came to Mary—"untouched by any man" (as the Book relates)—with the glad tidings of the Nativity. "Kun" (Be) is the word the Koran uses with which, by God's Will, creations and natural destructions were made possible from the beginning through the end of time.

Differences in beliefs notwithstanding, children sang Christmas carols at houses freely at night, while teenagers took part in Christmas sports tournaments and amateur singing contests.

There was everything but violence in these communities showing healthy signs of coexistence among residents embracing different faiths.

Mayor Hadji Samir Uy of Datu Piang described those years as the "glory days" of his youth which, he said, he wanted revived with the cooperation of his constituents.

Islamic leaders justified this seeming tolerance with a Koran verse that said in part, "And Let there be no compulsion in religion," and another one ending with: "Yours shalt be thine religion (belief); Mine shalt (this) religion, be!"

Tolerance

This behavior was expounded in the writings of a British scholar, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, who translated the Koran to English in 1929, in comparative religions studies by African Bible scholar Ahmed Deedat and others by Roger Garaudy, a French-Marxist political scientist and military commander in the Algerian campaign, who became a Muslim.

Until 1976, Muslims heard in Friday prayer sermons (*hutba*) that told of the first Christmas tree being the dates palm tree in Baiytlahm (Bethlehem) that shaded the Nativity of Eesa ibnu Mariam (Jesus the son of Mary) from the blinding night star that shone through that ancient city. But whether this happened on a December 25, once upon a time, didn't matter much to Muslims.

But things changed when a "study group" of young Muslims (to be collectively known later as the Abu Sayyaf Group) interpreted the Koran in the late 1980s "in the light of the present situation," according to Prof. Julkipli Wadi of the University of the Philippines' Institute of Islamic Studies.

For instance, the "holy war" historically associated with the Crusade Expeditions (Bernard Lewis Crisis of Islam), for which Pope John Paul II apologized to the Muslim world in 2000, is now the feared "jihad" of Muslim extremists. "Because of the current global development, it (jihad) has become 'holy war,'" Wadi once said.

Many Christians and Muslims agreed with Wadi that jihad is a kind of war that Muslims wage on non-Muslims and thus, "holy" to Islamists.

The 2000 edition of the Oxford Dictionary of World Religions defines "jihad" as an Arabic term derived from the root word "jahada," which means "to make effort (at .making things right) from one's self to the community" s/he lives in—which is jihad's "highest form" (*akbar*), an ultimate option of resorting to engaging in war, but in the strictest sense of only in the case of "defending lives, property and/or community" constitutes the lighter (*asghar*) jihad.

English translation

An emerging new English translation interprets "jihad" as "holy struggle" and emphasizes the Arabic term "kahafir" (unbeliever) the phrase "i.e. the Christians and the Jews" in parentheses.

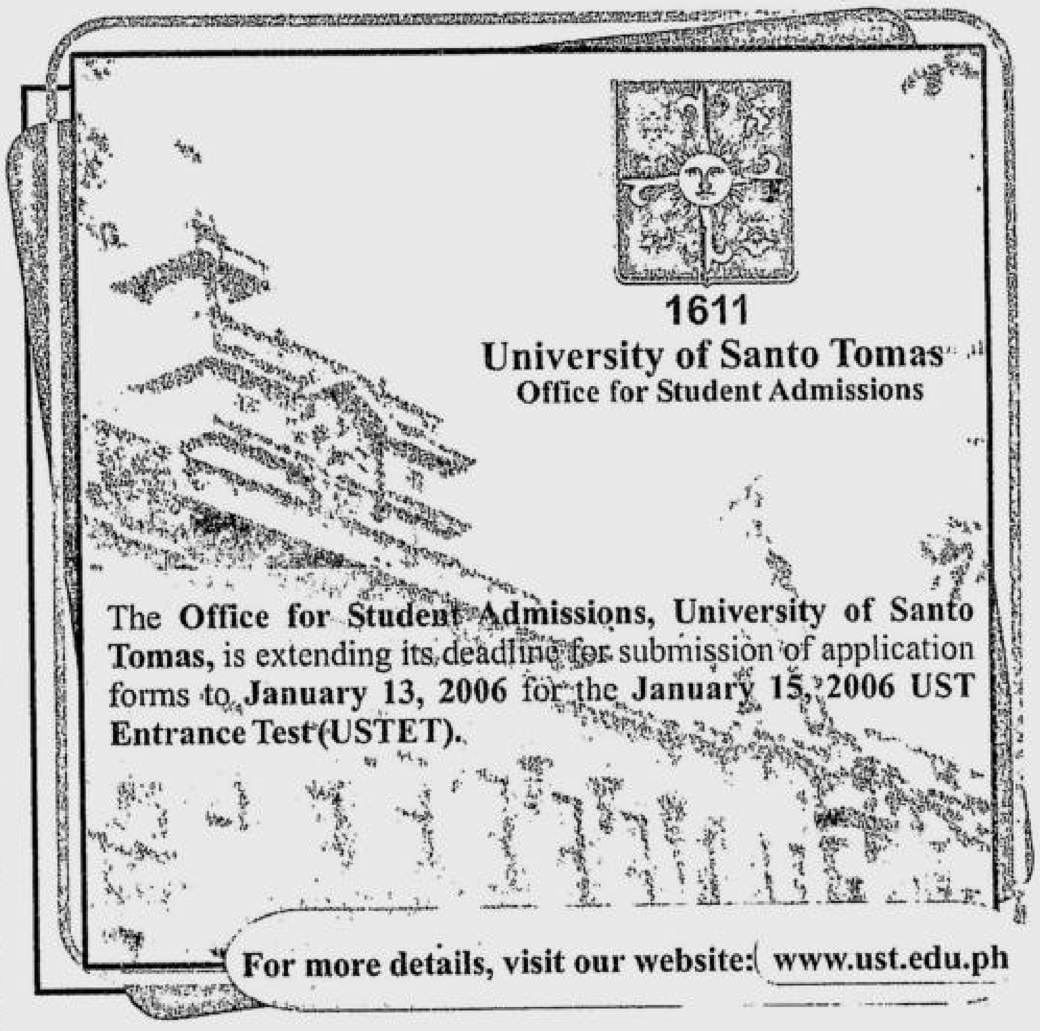
The Book's original Arabic texts and authorized foreign translations, thus far, indicate the place where each *sura* (chapter) was revealed—as either Mecca or Medina. For example, the word "Khafirun" (pl. form: unbelievers) is used in one verse revealed in Mecca (where there was neither a Jew nor a Christian) to describe Prophet Muhammad's adversary kin who had wanted a sort of negotiation bargaining—after vigorously opposing his campaign for righteousness.

In comparison, a verse revealed in Medina, the Koran is specific in its reference to the Yahud (Jews) and the then majority Nasrani (Christians) about violations of truces between them and the government of Muhammad.

Muhammad was a migrant when elected to the governing council of the 6th-century Medina whose members were Christians, Jews and some atheists. Armed only with the "jihad" for character perfection that he had cultivated in Mecca and in migrant residency in Medina, the council soon named him unanimously head of state—without bloodshed.

Still, one Koran verse revealed in Medina says: "You will find good friendship in those who say, 'We are Christians …"

Muhammad probably found it most fulfilling in one occasion when a Christian warrior was said to have protected him from the then hostile Makkans as he performed religious rituals at the Ka'aba (the Muslim holy shrine built by Abraham and Ishmael south of the biblical Beersheba [Genesis], now Mecca).



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New Maguindanao sultan to pursue self-determination

A NEWLY ENTHRONED SULtan in Maguindanao said he will actively pursue the right to self-rule for Maguindanao people under the United Nations Charter and international agreements.

Datu Amir Baraguir, a writer-historian, was named to the royal throne as Seri Paduka Sultan Sayyid Hadji Datu Amir bin Muhammad Baraguir during solemn traditional ceremonies at the Estosan Garden Hotel in Cotabato City.

Baraguir, who used to write a column for the INQUIRER, was enthroned as Maguindanao's 25th Sultan on Dec. 12.

The third son of the late Sultan Muhammad G.M. Baraguir and Bai Fatima Carmen Andong, Baraguir traces his roots from Mindanao's three historic royalties—Maguindanao, Buayan and Kabuntalan.

The 45-year-old Sultan noted that UN Charter provisions applicable to colonized nations and states like Maguindanao "or 'Mindanao' in today's parlance" in effect provided every Filipino the duty "to help, if not cause, Maguindanao to pursue [the] right [to self-determination]."

Indigenous nationhood

He said forms of self-determination the UN has resolved in recognizing "indigenous nationhood" ranged from "autonomous future" to "nationhood past" (in the case of Maguindanao) under the so-called Indian Doctrine.

He said he hoped a shift to the federal parliamentary form of government could give more substance to these rights "under the Principle of Incorporation" of nations in international laws.

But he lamented that contemporary sultans have had "little else to do" than acting as "symbols of unity for those whose traditional and historical moorings are still intact, and in serving in limited capacity as a patron of Maguindanaon arts, culture and tradition."

Today the sultan no longer has the powers and authorities to address the problems of "inadequate or inappropriate education, poverty, high mortality and morbidity rates, lack of stable peace and the absence of a proper and more integrated moral, social and cultural direction" according to Baraguir.

Under the reign of Sultan Muhammad Dipatuan Qudratullah Nasiruddin, better known in history as Sultan Kudarat, the sultanate's dominion expanded to as far north as Zamboanga Peninsula; part of today's Maguindanao province; Caraga Region (i.e. ceded to Spain under the 1645 Lopez-Kudarat Treaty); and Basilan to the West. For a time, the reign subjugated the old Kingdom of Ternate in the present-day Indonesia.

He fiercely resisted Spain's futile attempts to conquer Maguindanao.

Mandate

Baraguir said the diminishing mandate of the sultanate has been detrimental to the Philippine government and a "misfortune" to Maguindanao.

But this state of affairs need not continue, he said.

The royal leadership, he said, will act as catalyst in pursuit of Maguindanao's right to self-determination and serve as the voice of the underprivileged and advocate of redistributive justice in Maguindanao and, if possible, the world.

"The current Sultanate of Maguindanao is committed to the creative restoration of all [its] roles during the Era of Independence, without radically uprooting the present regime, and in accordance with constitutional law, order and propriety," Baraguir said in his 10-minute speech.

Baraguir said it was "in the interest of the Maguindanaon people, the Philippine state, and the global community that the sultanate be explored as a dynamic institution for more rational and sustainable peace in this part of the world" – and which, he said, has legal and moral bases.

He cited provisions of the UN Charter that guarantees the principle of self-determination for colonized nations and states "similar to the once-sovereign Maguindanao."

"Thus, Filipinos from the ordinary citizens to the highest policy-makers, are not only morally but legally obliged to help, if not cause, Maguindanao to pursue that right (self-governance). For the peoples of Maguindanao, this is a supreme patriotic duty," Baraguir said. *Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS Sayyid Hajji Datu Amir Andong bin Muhammad Baraguir, the Sultan of Maguindanao, poses with Datu Dacula VI of Sibugay during the Enthronement Rites held Dec. 12. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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3 die as 'Quedan' floods Bicol towns

LEGAZPI CITY—THREE PERSONS DROWNED AS heavy rains brought flash floods in at least 12 towns in four provinces in Bicol, forcing 1,750 families to flee, according to the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) here.

Arnel Capili, OCD regional director, said only one of the casualties was identified by the Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council of Malinao in Albay. The victim was Ramir Candano.

The other two were residents of Bacon, Sorsogon but their identities have yet to be determined, Capili said.

The rains were brought by tropical depression "Quedan" which moved west southwest yesterday and was over northern Palawan as of 11 p.m.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said Quedan was expected to be 300 km of Coron, Palawan this morning.

Public storm signal No. 1 was raised over Mindoro, Lubang Island, Antique, Aklan, Pagasa Island, Palawan, the Calamian Group and Cuyo Island.

Metro Manila will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms.

Heavy rains caused floods in some areas of Albay, Camarines Sur, Sorsogon and Catanduanes.

But the worst hit was Camarines Sur, with more than 1,700 families evacuated in the municipality of Bato, which had five flooded villages—barangays Sta. Cruz, Tres Reyes, Divina Pastora, San Rafael and Santiago.

The heavy rains also prompted the Philippine Ports Authority to cancel all sea travel from major ports in the region, leaving at least 300 passengers and 10 vessels stranded in the ports of Bulan and Pilar, both in Sorsogon.

In Mindoro, unabated rains and the damaged protection dike, which has not yet been repaired, caused the Bocayao and Magasawang Tubig rivers to overflow once again, threatening to submerge the City of Calapan.

Residents fear a repeat of last week's flooding that left two people dead.

"If the rains do not stop, I am afraid the floodwaters would be even higher than that of last week," city administrator Doy Leachon said in a telephone interview.

Leachon also reported that evacuation of residents in threatened areas has started.

In Barangay Sta. Isabel, at least 24 families have already been evacuated.

In Palawan, rains have stopped, allowing government engineering personnel to start repairing damaged roads.

Relief goods were sent to Aborlan town for 200 families.

Relief operations were also ongoing in Dumaran town yesterday. *Gil Francis G. Arevalo, Marciano T. Virola Jr. and Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Soldiers face charges

COTABATO CITY—Two soldiers in North Cotabato are facing robbery and murder charges in connection with the death of two employees of Standard Rubber Corp. in Makilala town on Dec. 12. Col. Ruperto Pabustan, commander of the 602nd Infantry Brigade, said Sgt. Jessie Canono and Pfc. Mosani Lacsasa of the 40th Infantry Battalion are in "hot water" as they would also be discharged from service if found guilty of double murder with robbery, which was filed in court on Friday. "I don't condone and tolerate criminal or any illegal act by my men," Pabustan said.

Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Bandits yield

MALAPATAN, Sarangani Province—A group of bandits responsible for a series of robberies victimizing businessmen and poor farmers surrendered to the police and turned over their firearms here on Friday. Provincial police director Senior Supt. Efren Valeriano identified the leader of the eight bandits as a certain Berting Macon, a resident of Sitio Cambas in Kinam village. The surrender was made possible with the help of two town councilors, Valeriano said.

Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Shed inaugurated

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Well-wishers of ship passengers going out as well as welcoming friends and relatives of those coming in through the pier here will now be comfortable while waiting, with the establishment of the Passenger Assistance Services System (PASS) building of the Philippine Ports Authority. The 320-seat two-story well-wishers' shed, the first and so far the only one in the country, was acquired by the PPA-Palawan through the initiative of Palawan Rep. Abraham Kahlil B. Mitra from the nautical highway program of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Geraldford P. Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Tolosanos' induction

THE UNITED Tolosanos Association, Inc. (formerly Tolosanos Association Inc.), an organization of Manila-based residents of Tolosa, Leyte, will hold its Christmas party and induction of officers on Dec. 23, 10 a.m. at the St. Rita College Gym, Sucat, Parañaque City. The event is sponsored by Victoria Pesado-Ongbico, the Hermana Mayor for the 2006 Fiesta Celebration in honor of St. Michael, the patron saint of Tolosa, Leyte. For details, please contact Romy De Leon at 801-5473.

Diarrhea kills child

TACLOBAN CITY—A two-year-old girl died while 47 others fell ill due to diarrhea that was blamed on contaminated drinking water coming from water pumps and open wells in Salcedo, Eastern Samar. The 47 were confined at the Felipe Abrigo Memorial Hospital (FAMH) in Guiuan town, about 15 km from Salcedo. The number did not include those treated in private clinics, said nurse Zusima Andil. Andil said the girl, a resident of Barangay Burak, died in the hospital while being treated on Dec. 11. Andil said that out of Salcedo's 40 barangays, 10 were reported to have cases of diarrhea, and majority of the victims were children below five years old.

Joey A. Gableta, PDI Visayas Bureau

Christmas bonus for workers

MAASIN CITY—The provincial government will play Santa Claus to about 500 regular employees who will each receive P7,500 in Christmas bonuses. Provincial budget officer Joey Duarte said about 200 casual and job order employees would also receive P4,000 each and P1,000 each, respectively. Duarte said the bonuses would be taken from the savings of the province and funds from the unfilled positions.

Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau

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AID QUEUE
Poor residents of Real, Quezon await the distribution of goods from the Department of Social Welfare and Development inside the Real Central Elementary School covered court. President Arroyo was supposed to visit, but bad weather prevented her journey.

Bayan Muna member, 2 others killed in attacks

SAN ILDEFONSO, BULACAN—A Bayan Muna coordinator here and two village officials supporting the party-list group in Mexico, Pampanga, were killed in separate attacks on Friday, reports said.

Jessie Alcantara, 46, was driving his tricycle along Barangay Pinaod when a man shot him in the head at 1:20 p.m.

Roman Polintan, chair of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) in Central Luzon, said soldiers from the Army's 24th Infantry Battalion was searching for Alcantara before the attack.

Alcantara was a local Bayan Muna coordinator and a former leader of an organization of tricycle drivers in this town.

In Pampanga, Parian Barangay Captain Victorina Gomez and village Councilor Romeo Atienza, both of Mexico town, died in a 5:10 p.m. ambush by two men aboard a motorcycle.

Reynaldo Macabali, another village councilor, survived the attack, said Senior Insp. Roger Tomen, Mexico police chief.

The three had just left a village meeting presided over by the military when the attack took place, leaders of the farmers' group Aguman da reng Maglalautang Capampangan said.

Lt. Col. Ricardo Visaya, commander of the Army's 69th IB, ruled out his men's role in the attack. Gomez, Visaya said, supported the military's counter-insurgency campaign in the village.

Polintan said Gomez and the village council closely coordinated with the Bayan Muna, which was funding the construction of a multi-purpose building there.

Alcantara was the 27th victim of extra-judicial killings among political activists in the region since September when Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan assumed command of the Army's 7th Infantry Division. *Tonette Orejas and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Mindanao group backs UN-sponsored poll on Moro state

COTABATO CITY—A MINDANAO-based cause oriented group has proposed three options to the government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front peace panels to fast track the peace process.

These included the holding of a UN-managed referendum, which would be held seven or 10 years after a peace agreement has been signed.

The proposal, embodied in a resolution approved by the Mindanao People's Peace Movement (MPPM) during its meeting in Midsayap, North Cotabato on Dec. 12-15, suggested that people should decide the kind of political setup they want.

MPPM chair Alvaro Sinturias said the referendum issue consist of enhanced autonomy for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao; a federal state within a Federal Republic of the Philippines; and the establishment of an independent Bangsamoro Republic.

Sinturias admitted that the third option is "the most controversial."

Instead of an earlier proposal for the United Nations to just supervise the political exercise, Sinturias said they believe that a UN-managed referendum would be more ideal in a country known for its strong biases.

The UN's "direct hand" in the referendum would ensure impartiality, said Sinturias, whose second choice was tapping the help of the European Union.

A government-run referendum would be self-serving, working for its own interest, commented Sinturias, who also alleged that an Organization of the Islamic Conference-managed plebiscite might be construed as favoring Muslims in Mindanao.

He said the suggestion to hold the referendum should be seven or 10 years after the government and the MILF peace negotiators should have signed a peace agreement.

The reason, he said, is to give residents ample time to study the issues. *Charlie C. Señase and Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Judge denies reports on illicit affair

KORONADAL CITY—A REGIONAL trial court judge here denied having an affair with one of his court employees saying reports about it are inaccurate and malicious.

Judge Oscar Dinopol of the RTC Branch 24 also clarified that the reports, which became the basis of the libel case he filed against four journalists here, delved not on his alleged illicit love affair with one of his court employees.

He claimed that the reports, written by Alejandro Reblando, correspondent of Manila Bulletin and the local weekly tabloid The South Cotabato Forum, were about the alleged complaints filed by four lawyers against him for bribery and immorality.

Dinopol said the reports were inaccurate as shown by a certification dated March 3, 2005 from the Office of the Court Administrator of the Supreme Court certifying that he has no pending administrative case involving bribery and immorality.

He said he could not understand why he was being accused of having an illicit affair when he put an end to a scandalous affair in the Hall of Justice here during his tenure as executive judge from January 2002 to April this year.

"How could I be involved in such act when in fact I am the one who's preventing it," Dinopol said.

The report, he said, brought not only mental and emotional anguish to him and his family but also "has unjustly caused public impression that I initiated and tolerated immoral behavior in my court." *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Sickness hounds priests

DAGUPAN CITY—THE NINE-DAY DAWN Masses make priests sick, according to Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz.

"Priests have to get up very early in the morning and the chilly temperature has taken its toll on the priests' health," Cruz said. "Most of them are suffering from colds, cough and fever."

Priests usually have to say two Masses at dawn and another in the early evening.

Aside from waking up early in the nippy morning, traveling from one church to another could also be tiring, Cruz said.

Sometimes, the Masses are held in the church's patios because not everyone can be accommodated inside, he said.

He said some chapels in the villages also hold dawn Masses and the priests travel from chapel to chapel.

Cruz said he has been advising his priests to drink a lot of calamansi juice, to eat a lot of vegetables and less of meat to minimize their intake of salty, sweet and oily foods.

"*Para na nga akong sirang plaka* (I've been sounding like a broken record)," he said, adding that most of the time, his pieces of advice fall on deaf ears.

He added: "But look, there's not one priest around, and the *simbang gabi* has just started. They could be sleeping or resting, and I'm sure many of them are suffering from colds already."

The dawn Masses were introduced during the Spanish regime when farmers had no time to go to Mass during the day as they were working in the field or in the afternoon, because they were tired, or evening because they slept early.

Currently, there are parishes, especially in the cities, that hold not dawn Masses but early evening Mass "because city folk have to go to work early." *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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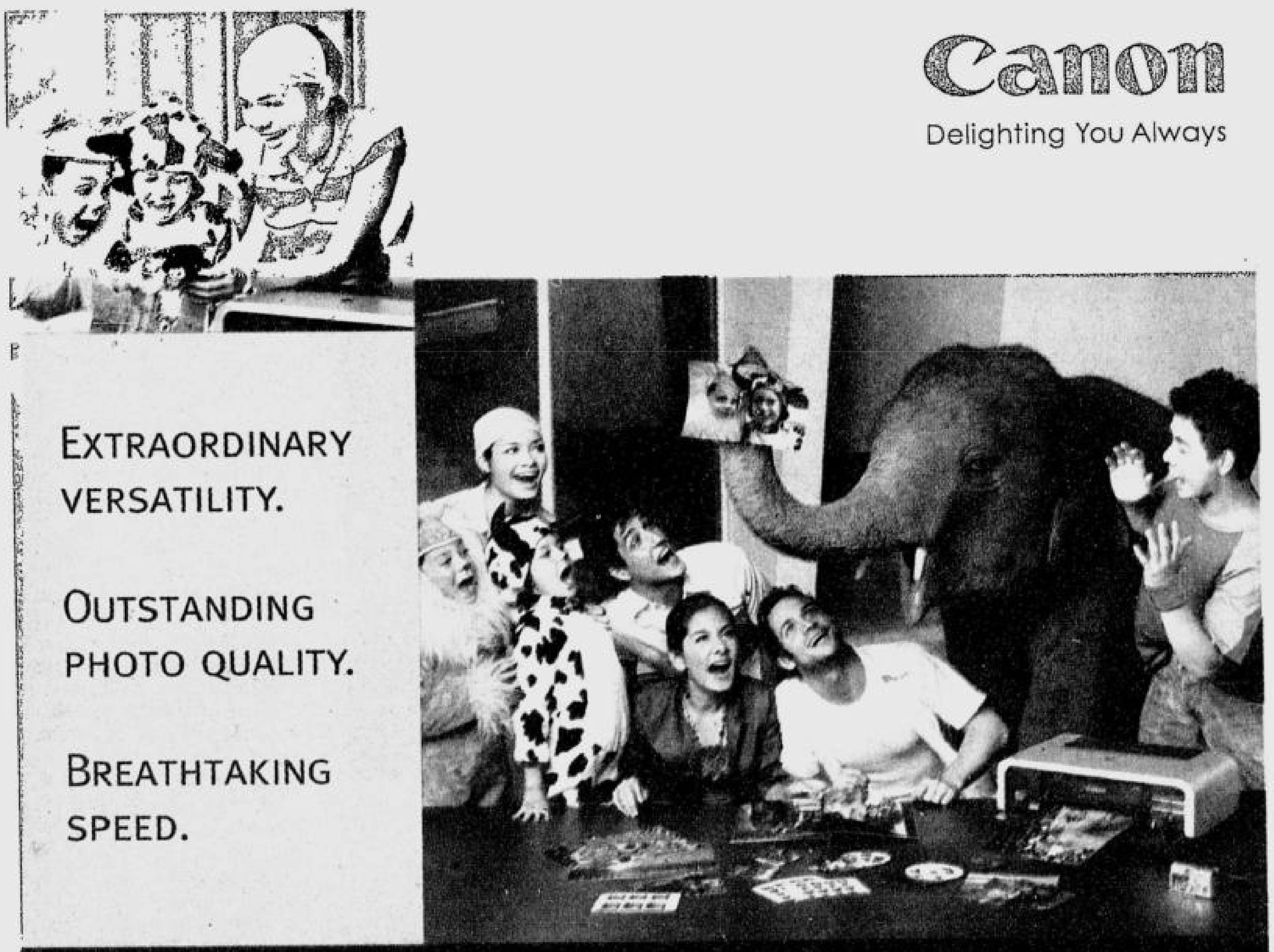
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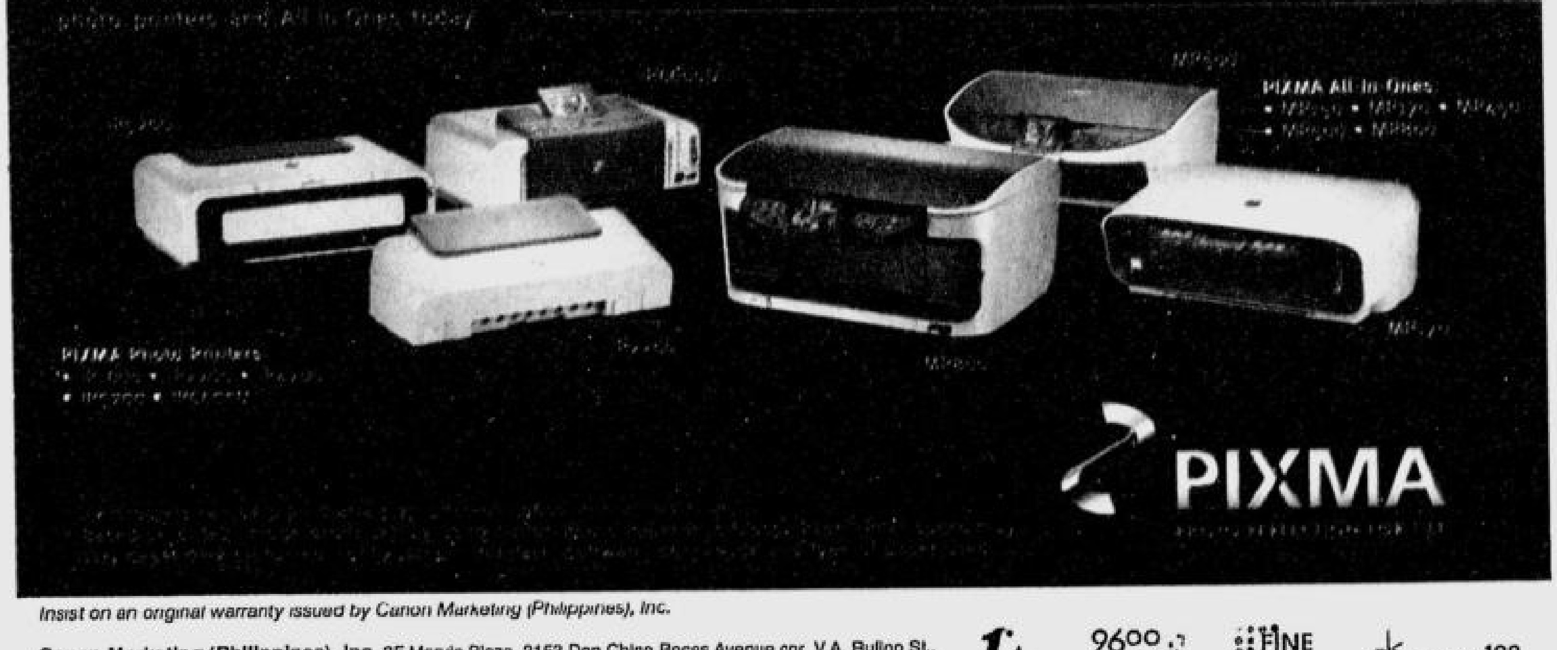

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Navarrete goes wild again, beats driver

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A TRIcycle driver here suffered a busted lip and is now running a fever after he was beaten up on Thursday by former World Boxing Council Junior Lightweight champion Rolando Navarrete.

The victim, identified as David Miko, a resident of Labangal Village here, was driving his tricycle early Thursday along Alunan Avenue in Bula Village when he was flagged down by Navarrete.

The former boxing champion asked the driver to give him a lift, but David refused because he had a passenger.

Lando blew his top and without saying anything, punched the driver in the mouth.

David was knocked to the ground but he managed to get up and run. But the former ring fighter chased David and delivered another punch hitting him in the back.

Celso, elder brother of the victim, told reporters his brother managed to escape and after several minutes went back to the area to retrieve his tricycle upon seeing Lando was already gone.

When the victim went home that day, he showed to his family his busted lip and told them he had a fever. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Carolers for a cause spread cheer

By Nancy C. Carvajal

FOR NEARLY 14 YEARS, A CHORAL GROUP called "Munting Tinig" has been spreading cheer and goodwill at Christmas time to residents in Barangay 18, Caloocan City.

Composed of nine boys and girls whose ages range from eight to 12, the group goes a-caroling, singing Christmas songs composed and arranged by Orlando Maunio, who founded the group.

Unlike other carolers, however, the money collected by the group does not go into their pockets but to the more needy residents in the barangay.

"The children have always uplifted the holiday spirit of barangay residents and nearby areas, particularly during the yuletide season," said Barangay Kagawad Lina Makisig.

In fact, the residents have become so used to seeing the group every year that to most people in Barangay 18, the holiday season has not officially began until the children start going around the community, singing Christmas carols.

Members come and go

Maunio said that since he formed "Munting Tinig" in 1991, nearly a hundred children have joined the choral group.

"Some left because they moved and others decided to quit because they felt they were already old for caroling," said Vicky, Maunio's wife and the group's co-founder.

The carolers' repertoire consists of traditional Christmas songs and Maunio's original compositions. The group also takes requests from the audience.

"We start our caroling with happy songs like the '*ninong*' who hides from his '*inaanaks*,' a Tagalog version of Jingle Bells and finish with a song about a child's longing for a parent," Maunio said.

He added that when he formed the group, his goal was to raise funds for residents in the barangay who were unemployed but had talented children.

"But we saw and felt the deep poverty around us and we thought, maybe we could help in alleviating their situation even for just one day, on Christmas eve," Maunio said.

So for the past years, the group has used the money it collected from caroling to buy food for the noche buena of poor families in the area.

Part of the money even went to the construction of a barangay outpost in the area where there was a high incidence of petty crimes.

Dancel Ramirez's, a former member who joined "Munting Tinig" when she was only 8 years old, has two daughters in the group.

'A better person'

Ramirez said she encouraged her children to join because "the lessons and the memories I had with the group has made me a better and stronger person."

She also wanted her children to experience the joy of sharing, she added.

Ramirez recalled that when she was a member of the group, Cedes Santos, one of the persons they had chosen to be a beneficiary, had refused to let them in.

"She did not know that we were there not to beg but to share," she said.

Undaunted, the group continued to sing. Finally, Santos opened the door.

"And before she could say something, I gave her the bag with five kilos of rice and groceries. She looked at me, hugged me and we both cried," Ramirez narrated.

THESE children are the newest members of the choral group "Munting Tinig." The membership of the group has changed over the years but its commitment has remained the same: to share the spirit of Christmas with the needy.

NELSON ORTIZ, CONTRIBUTOR

For three years until her death in 1994, Santos remained one of the group's beneficiaries.

The economic crisis may have lessened people's generosity to carolers this year but it has not affected the commitment of the group's members, Ramirez said.

"It has not dampened our spirit. We will continue to go around and sing for the community because there are a lot of people like Aling Cedes who yearn for Christmas," she said.

Roldan won't be home for Christmas; will remain in jail

ROLDAN

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

COLD PRISON BARS WILL NOT PREVENT actor and former congressman Dennis Roldan from celebrating Christmas with his family.

Roldan, who is accused of masterminding the kidnapping of a 3-year-old Filipino-Chinese boy in February, is detained at the Pasig City Jail.

"I will still spend my Christmas with my family, except that we have a different venue this year," he told the INQUIRER during a hearing last week, smiling.

He said his wife, who has been consistently attending the court hearings, and their two daughters will just visit him in jail on Christmas Day.

He said he had been praying everyday that "the truth will come out."

The prosecution has presented 10 witnesses since the trial began, most of them linking Roldan to the kidnapping.

Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response operatives, who conducted surveillance operations on Roldan and his cohorts before their arrest, testified that they saw him in the alleged safe houses where the boy was kept.

Suspect turned state witness Alberto Pagdanganan also said he received instructions from Roldan and his alleged girlfriend, Suzette Wang, who remains at large.

Pagdanganan said Roldan, whose real name is Mitchell Gumabao, even personally negotiated with the boy's mother for the ransom.

But Roldan has consistently denied the allegations.

"You heard Pagdanganan's testimony. He was making all the decisions by himself," he said.

Pagdanganan earlier admitted that he was the one who rented the safe houses where he hid the victim. But he claimed his decisions were based on Roldan's instructions, who even provided him with a P225,000 budget.

Roldan filed an application for bail last week, saying the evidence against him was weak.

But the prosecution blocked the application for bail last Tuesday, which was the last scheduled hearing this year.

The next hearing was set on Jan. 17, 2006. His lawyer Siegfrid Fortun said he would be presenting only one witness to justify the bail application.

LRTA imposes speed limit on trains to stop suicides

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (LRTA) has set a speed limit for the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system Line 1 to prevent suicides.

LRTA administrator Mel Robles said train drivers have been asked to slow down to 15 km an hour as they approach the platform of each station to give them time to step on the brakes.

"Historically, suicide attempts go up during the holiday season," said Robles. "Two weeks ago, one of our train drivers was able to step on the brakes," preventing a suicide attempt, he added.

Since the start of the year, four men have tried to kill themselves by jumping onto the tracks of the LRT Line 1. Only one succeeded.

Most of the suicide attempts took place at the Vito Cruz station, Robles said.

"We are taking precautions to prevent these suicide attempts from being successful," he said.

So far, no one has attempted to commit suicide along the LRT Line 2 which runs from Santolan in Pasig to Recto in Manila.

The LRT Line 1, on the other, runs from Monumento to Baclaran.

Robles said the LRTA has stepped up its security measures during the holiday season. To avoid being inconvenienced, he advised commuters from carrying gift-wrapped items.

The LRTA will also extend LRT Line 1 operations by 30 minutes starting on the 16th until the 23rd.

Normally, the LRT Line 1 runs from 5 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. With the extension, the last train bound for Monumento will leave the Baclaran station at 9:30 p.m. On the other hand, the last train bound for Baclaran will leave the Monumento station at 10 p.m.

Train operations, however, will be shortened by an hour and a half on Dec. 24 and 31.

On these two days, the last train for Monumento will leave the Baclaran station at 7:30 p.m. The last train for Baclaran will leave the Monumento station at 8 p.m.

Train operations will return to normal from Dec. 25 to 30.

Robles said they expect fewer commuters on the eve of Christmas Day and New Year's Day. The LRTA will use the shortened operating hours to conduct maintenance checks, he added.

More shopping districts watched

By Margaux C. Ortiz

FOLLOWING THE LAUNCHING OF THE SAFE shopping campaign in the Divisoria area, the Manila Police have also started enforcing tighter security and traffic measures in the equally popular shopping districts of Binondo, Quiapo and Sta. Cruz.

"We have dispatched plainclothes policemen and additional police officers in Chinatown and Quiapo because more people are expected to visit these places to shop during the holidays," Manila Police District (MPD) director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong said in a statement.

Bulaong added that the policemen would also help in the MPD's clean-up drive, particularly in the removal of illegal terminals, sidewalk vendors and other forms of obstruction.

"MPD elements could provide immediate police assistance to the public in case of emergency if the areas are free from all forms of obstruction," he said.

Bulaong encouraged the public to cooperate with law enforcers by sending text messages to Smart 700PIT (700748) about criminal incidents.

The MPD earlier implemented a traffic management improvement plan to deal with the huge volume of motorists and pedestrians expected to troop to Divisoria to do their Christmas shopping.

The MPD Traffic Management Group (TEG) led by Supt. Roberto dela Rosa established several "No Loading and Unloading" zones in areas to ensure the smooth flow of vehicles along Felipe II Street, where two huge shopping malls, the 168 and Meisic malls, are located.

Under the traffic scheme, public utility vehicles can only load and unload passengers at designated areas, including the west side portion of Reina Regente Street.

The TEG also recommended the installation of steel railings along Reina Regente Street, from the corner of Felipe II Street up to Alvarado Street, to prevent counter flow violations in the traffic-congested area.

Pedestrian lanes were likewise put up across the Meisic Mall to allow shoppers to cross the road safely and in an orderly fashion.

METROBRIEFS

Suspected phone thief charged

THE QUEZON CITY police yesterday filed three counts of robbery against a man who claimed to be the son of former action star Jun Aristorenas. Chief Insp. Lino Banaag, head of the Police Investigation Unit, identified the suspect as Jonar Aristorenas, 37, alias James and Gerald Bagatsing. Banaag said the suspect's victims included a former senator's relative, the talent manager of a popular band and a marketing coordinator. According to the police, Aristorenas' modus operandi was to call up his would-be victims to tell them that he was interested in hiring a band for a party. He would then seek a meeting. One of his victims, Chairmaine Inductivo, described the suspect as polite, handsome and fluent in English. "He asked me if we could meet because he needed to hire talents for a party in Corinthian Gardens on Sunday," Inductivo said. Aristorenas had introduced himself as a relative of the prominent Ayala family, she added. Police said that when the two met, the suspect suddenly grabbed the victim's bag and tried to escape. He was stopped, however by policemen who happened to be in the area. Another victim, Karel Honasan, a relative of former Sen. Gregorio Honasan, said the suspect would call his victims right before the meeting to ensure that they would be holding their cellular phones. "But the suspect, instead of shaking our hands, grabbed our cell phones and ran away," he told the police. Police said they are expecting more victims to surface and file charges against Aristorenas who has denied the accusations against him.

Nancy C. Carvajal

NICE TO MEET YOU MR.- AY! CEL KO!

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Bigger budget for QC

QUEZON City's budget for 2006 is up by almost half a billion pesos, as the city government seeks to spend more on social welfare. The city council recently approved a P6.25 billion budget for next year, an increase of 7.39 percent, or about P430 million, from 2004's P5.82 million budget. Of the budget, P2.67 billion, or as much as 42 percent of the entire budget, was allocated for social welfare and services, while 22.5 percent will be spent on economic services. In a statement, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. said his government would focus on health, social services, environment, education, youth welfare, peace and security and barangay empowerment in 2006. From 2005 levels, the city government is projecting an 18.29 percent increase in the collection of realty taxes, and 32 percent more for transfer taxes. It also expects to increase its revenues from service fees, as a result of local ordinances, as well as to finally settle its obligations with Landbank, which it inherited from the past administration. Budget deliberations were held before the joint meeting of the city council committees on laws, rules and internal government, appropriations, and ways and means. City administrator Paquito Ochoa Jr. presented the proposed annual budget, covering estimates for income and operational expenditures for 2006, to the council.

DJ Yap

Battle of San Mateo remembered

QUEZON City and the towns of San Mateo and Montalban, Rizal will commemorate the 106th anniversary of the Battle of San Mateo through a simple ceremony on Monday. With the National Historical Institute, the Quezon City government has prepared a cultural program honoring the heroes of the Battle of San Mateo, particularly Gen. Licerio Geronimo, whose forces killed the American general Henry W. Lawton. The commemorative program will start at 8 a.m. with a drum and lyre parade, followed by a wreath-laying ceremony in Barangay Silangan. Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. will lead the rites with Mayors Pedro Cuerpo and Jose Diaz of Rodriguez and San Mateo, respectively. Barangay Silangan, which used to be part of San Mateo, was the site of the Battle of San Mateo. In that battle on Dec. 19, 1899, Lawton and 13 American officers were killed by Geronimo's forces. Roy Daza, president of the Descendants of the Heroes of the Philippine-American War, 1898, will deliver an inspirational talk, while representatives from NHI and participant organizations will deliver short messages. Edgardo Ocampo, a descendant of Geronimo, will also speak. Geronimo was a leader of the Katipunan in the Montalban area even before Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo became president of the first Philippine Republic.

DJ Yap

Schools' transfer blocked

ABOUT 95 percent of the students from two schools in Binondo are opposed to the plan to move their schools to a new site. This was the finding of a survey conducted among students of the Rajah Sulayman and Jose Abad Santos high schools by the students themselves. The schools have a total student population of nearly 10,000. Based the relocation plan proposed by the Manila City government, the schools will be torn down to make way for a government housing project. From their current site on Meisic and Reina Regente Streets in Binondo, the schools will be moved to a 21,727-sq m lot on Numancia and Urbiztondo Streets, just a few blocks away. The students have asked the city government to reconsider the relocation plan which has already been approved by the City Council. Last month, the council approved two measures authorizing the transfer. The first authorized Mayor Lito Atienza to enter into an agreement with a corporation for the construction of a new school complex for the students. The second, meanwhile, authorized him to enter into an agreement with investors for the development of the schools' present site. Vice Mayor Danny Lacuna, who has sided with the students, has accused the City Council of railroading the two measures. The resolutions, he said, "will affect thousands of children from poor families who are working hard to study in order to improve their lot and ensure a better future for them and their families." Atienza, however, defended the project, saying it would greatly benefit the city and the people of Manila.

Tina G. Santos

Drowning victim?

BUSY looking for empty bottles he could sell, a scavenger was shocked yesterday morning when instead, he found the body of a boy floating on the Marikina River. He discovered the boy at 12:45 p.m. yesterday near a jogging lane on Sitio Libis in Barangay Calumpang, Marikina City, barangay officials said. The boy, who was about 13-16 years old, remains unidentified, investigator PO3 Roel Gural said. He said the boy was half-naked, wearing only a pair of blue shorts. The boy's hair was curly and his skin was fair. He had no visible external injuries. Gural said the boy could have drowned in the upstream, his frail body dragged by the current. The residents in the barangay could not identify the boy, leading investigators to believe he could have drowned elsewhere.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

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Editor **Ester G. Dipasupil**

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Still a Merry Christmas

By Tina G. Santos

DESPITE THEIR APPARENT FAILURE to stop the ongoing construction of a two-story building for teachers inside the contested Arroceros Forest Park in Manila, a group of environmentalists are not about to give up the fight.

"The case is not yet finished. We'll remain vigilant because we feel that it's our responsibility to protect the environment. And in the spirit of Christmas, we'll still celebrate by having a party, just a simple *salo-salo* (gathering) inside the forest," said Regina Paterno, president of Winner Foundation, the park caretaker.

Dubbed as "Pasko sa Gubat," the Christmas party, which will be held today, will be attended by environmental advocates and artists who draw inspiration from the forest park's lush foliage. It will be preceded by a Mass to be celebrated by running priest Fr. Robert Reyes.

The construction of the educational facility is now in full blast despite a case filed by the foundation against the city government which is pending in a Manila Regional Trial Court.

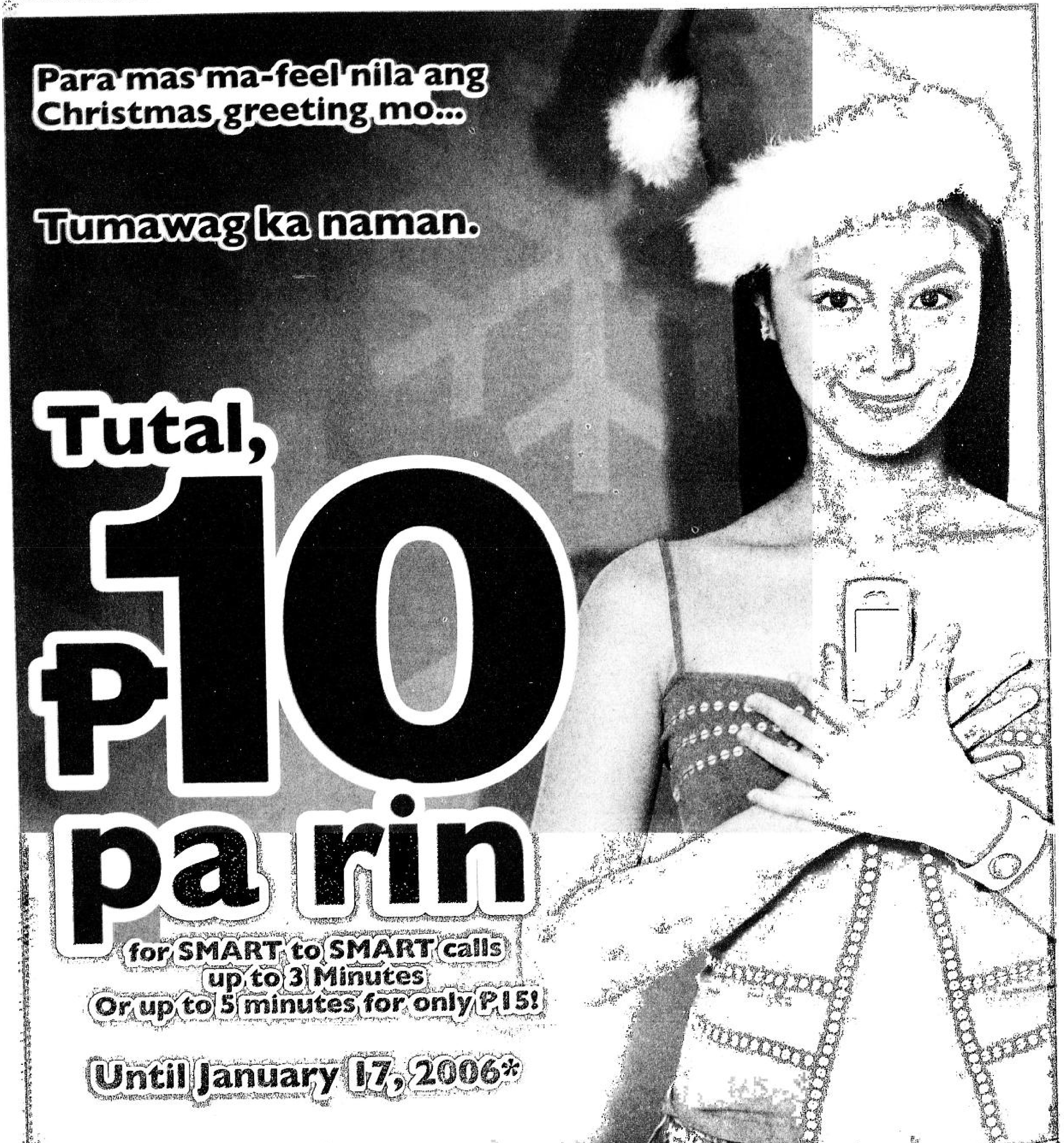
Winner has opposed the construction of the building inside the park—which was earlier declared an archaeological site—saying the move would result in the destruction of trees inside what it called Manila's "last lung."

Under a Memorandum of Agreement signed on Nov. 19, 1993, the City Hall turned over the 2.1-hectare property to the foundation which developed it as a park with lush greenery and a venue for weekend artists.

The city government, however, said the agreement is not binding because it was never approved by the City Council.

Paterno said students continue to visit the park despite the fact that its gates had been ordered closed by the city government due to the construction.

LANTERN PARADE
Children from an urban poor community in the metropolis display Christmas lanterns fashioned out of noodle wrappers, newspapers and dried fish. Their half-hidden banner says it all: Merry Crisismas.
JOAN BONDOC



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Rain or Shine edges Hapee-PCU

By Francis Ochoa

JAY-R REYES PICKED THE RIGHT time to come out of a three-quarter slump, nailing down the big shots in the payoff period to help Rain or Shine eke out a 71-69 victory over Hapee-PCU yesterday in the 2006 Heroes Cup at the JCSGO gym in Cubao.

Reyes, scoreless for three periods, pumped in nine points in the final frame as he made sure the heroics of teammate Jojo Tangkay wouldn't go down the drain.

Tangkay, the daredevil forward with a soft touch from the perimeter, exploded for 27 points in the first three quarters to anchor the Elasto Painters' comeback from several 13-point holes.

But it was the 6-foot-6 Reyes who completed the turnaround, hitting five big points in the final 40 seconds to ice the victory, the team's fifth in eight outings that tied them with Granny Goose at second in the standings.

"We started slow but I challenged the boys during halftime," said coach Caloy Garcia.

The Teethmasters saw their three-game run snapped and dropped to 4-4.

In the second game, Magnolia Dairy Ice Cream continued to underline its role as tournament favorite, turning back Montaña Pawnshop, 70-62, for its seventh win in eight assignments.

The Wizards are now just a win short of gaining at least a playoff for one of two automatic semifinal berths. And they have three more matches left in their schedule.

The Jewels dropped to 4-4.

After carrying the load for the team three-fourths of the way, Tangkay finally wore down and started losing his scoring touch. But Reyes came in at a crucial moment, nailing a tough jumper to help Rain or Shine peel away from a deadlock at 66 and set the stage for the big finish.

Meantime, the league takes a break starting tomorrow to give players, coaches and team staff enough time to celebrate their holidays with their loved ones. Action resumes on Jan. 7.

The scores:

First Game

RAIN OR SHINE 71—Tangkay 27, Sta. Maria 14, Reyes 9, Malabanan 6, Ortiguerra 5, Al Jamal 4, Tan 2, Sagad 2, Enrile 1, Cabatu 1, Javier 0, Orbeta 0.

HAPEE-PCU 69—Sanz 16, Castro 11, Espinas 10, Gonzales 9, Razon 8, Moreno 7, Misa 4, Solis 4, Belga 0.

Quarters: 14-21, 31-40, 51-52, 71-69.

Second Game

MAGNOLIA 70—Valenzuela 13, Williams 12, Santos 10, Chan 10, Rizada 8, Bombeo 7, Jones 6, Co 2, Isip 2, Misolas 0, Angeles 0, Te 0.

MONTAÑA 62—Juntilla 16, Compton 13, Vergara 12, Magpayo 10, Baguion 7, Capus 2, Dela Cuesta 2, Mercado 0, Bono 0, Guerrero 0.

Quarters: 12-9, 39-29, 53-49, 70-62.

GAMES TODAY
(La Salle Greenhills Gym)
2 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Granny Goose Tortillos
4 p.m.—Far Eastern Insurance vs Toyota Otis

Phone Pals thwart Aces, grab solo 2nd

By June Navarro

BALANGA—TALK 'N TEXT BUCKED a depleted lineup by leaning on Asi Taulava and Damien Cantrell to squeeze out a 92-84 victory over Alaska in the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference On Tour last night at the Bataan People's Center.

Cantrell powered his way to 26 points and 26 rebounds while Taulava finished with 24 points, 10 of them in the fourth, and added 10 boards as the Phone Pals picked up their eighth win in 14 games.

The victory enabled the shorthanded Phone Pals to regain the solo second spot and get a clear shot at an automatic semifinal berth. With their sixth loss in their last seven games, the Aces fell out of the outright semifinal derby.

Coach Tim Cone and the Aces are tied with Coca-Cola and San Miguel at 6-8, all of them targeting a modest quarterfinal seeding to avoid the survival round reserved for teams which end up eighth or ninth after the preliminaries.

Odell Bradley debuted for the Aces with 23 points and seven rebounds while Jeffrey Cariaso had 21, but went scoreless in the final period. Bradley replaced Tee McClary after the Aces lost five consecutive games.

Purefoods Chunkee already grabbed an outright semifinal ticket with its unreachable 10-5 record, with the Phone Pals, Red Bull (8-7), Air21 (8-7) and Barangay Ginebra (7-7) battling for the other slot.

Vic Pablo sat out the game with a bruised calf while rookie Jay Washington went under the knife to correct a dislocated shoulder.

The scores:

TALK 'N TEXT 92—Cantrell 26, Taulava 24, Miller 14, Alapag 7, Telan 7, Avenido 6, Cardona 5, Carey 3, Gelig 0, Salansang 0, Belano 0.

ALASKA 84—Bradley 23, Cariaso 21, Hugnatan 9, Allado 9, Cortez 6, Cablay 6, Thoss 4, Dela Cruz 4, Alvarez 2, Wilson 0.

Quarters: 23-25, 42-41, 70-64, 92-84

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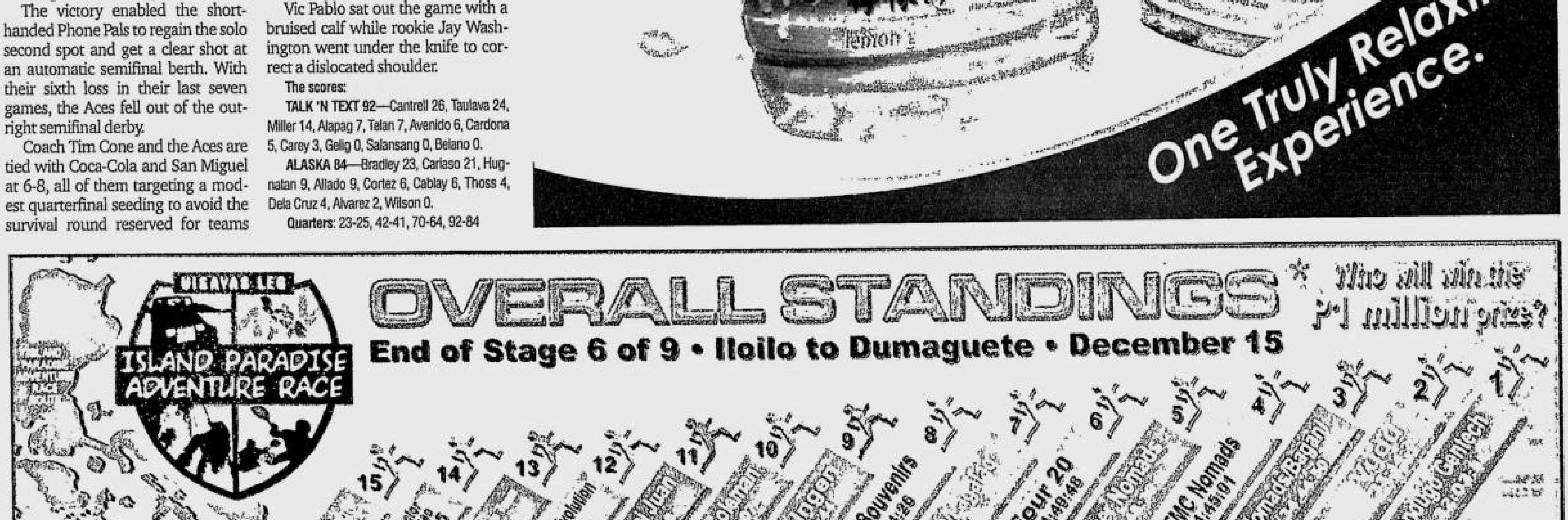
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Island Souvenirs 35:04:26
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Four 20 34:49:48
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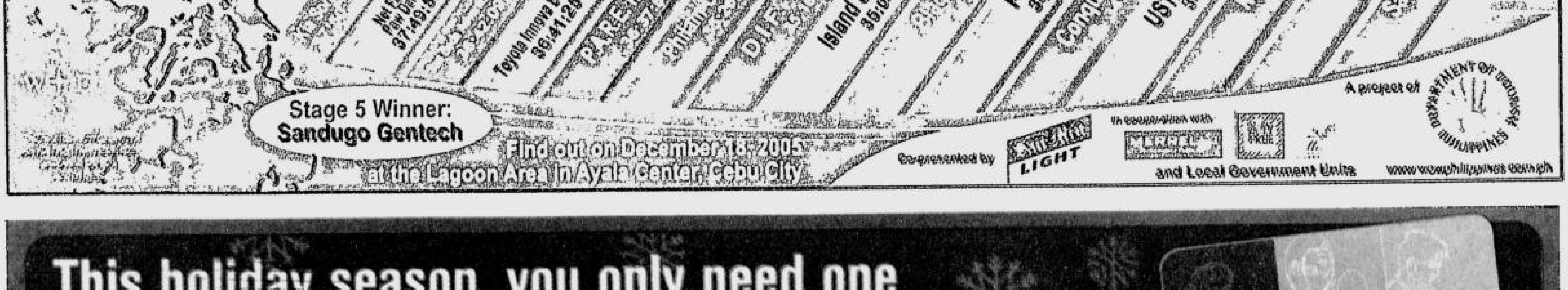
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Vidisola cops 2 golds; Thailand breaks loose

THE PHILIPPINES SNATCHED three gold medals, two courtesy of Isidro Vidisola, even as tracksters from Thailand and Malaysia dominated action n the 3rd Asean Para Games at the Rizal Memorial Track Stadium yesterday.

The one-armed Vidisola won gold medals in the 1500m and 800m run in Day 3 of this event featuring the best differently abled athletes from Southeast Asia.

Vidisola clocked four minutes and 27.94 seconds to rule the 1500m event, besting Thailand's Somkid Kummoongkun's 4:39.11 and Indonesia's Bambang Wahono's 4:47.29 to win the country's first gold in the event since the Games started six years ago.

He then topped the 800m in 2:09.18 for his second gold, while Thailand's Jamnong Muantawil and Chong Mow Chai of Malaysia finished second and third places with times of 2:10.45 and 2:13.27, respectively.

RP's third gold came from paraplegic Jerico Openia, who topped the shot put with a heave of 7.40m, besting compatriot Augusto Hernandez's 7.14m.

The Philippines hiked its total to seven gold medals but remained at seventh place in the biennial Games being held right after the Southeast Asian Games.

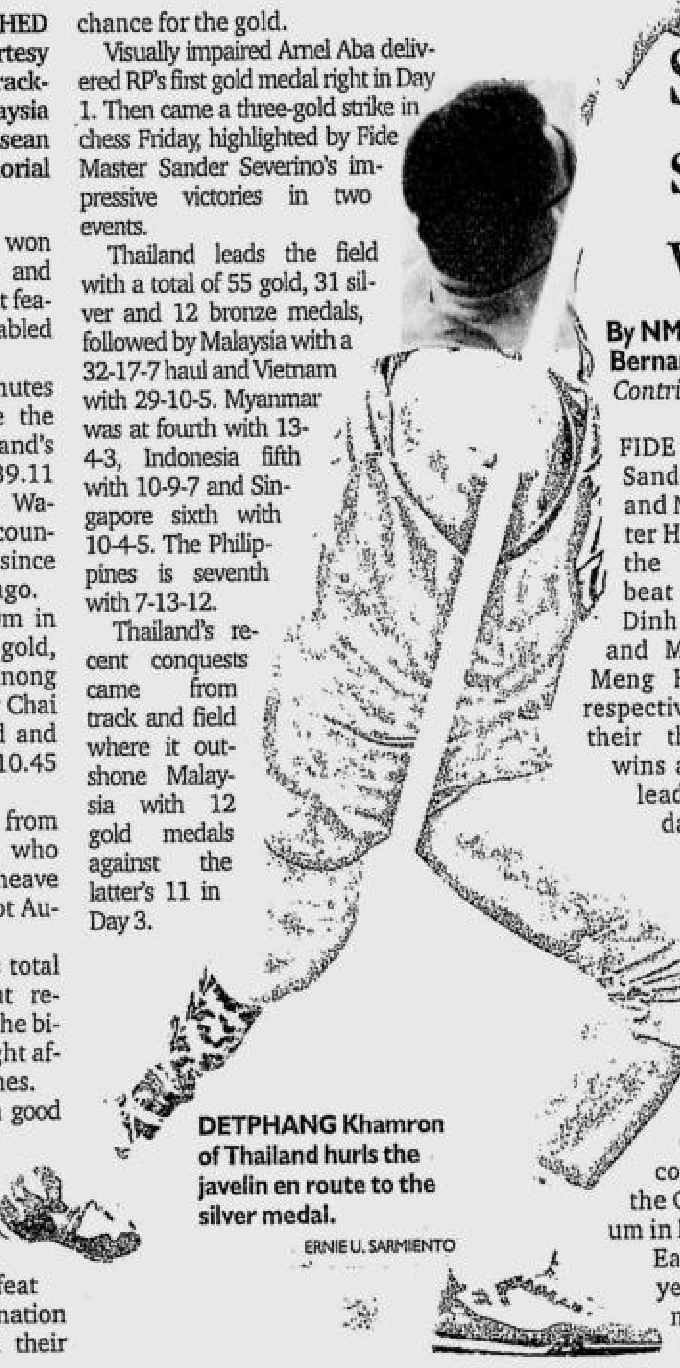
The RP squad also made a good account of itself in wheelchair basketball by beating Malaysia, 75-49, late Friday at the Emilio Aguinaldo College Gymnasium in Manila.

The Filipinos need to defeat the Thais in their last elimination round stint to strengthen their chance for the gold.

Visually impaired Arnel Aba delivered RP's first gold medal right in Day 1. Then came a three-gold strike in chess Friday, highlighted by Fide Master Sander Severino's impressive victories in two events.

Thailand leads the field with a total of 55 gold, 31 silver and 12 bronze medals, followed by Malaysia with a 32-17-7 haul and Vietnam with 29-10-5. Myanmar was at fourth with 13-4-3, Indonesia fifth with 10-9-7 and Singapore sixth with 10-4-5. The Philippines is seventh with 7-13-12.

Thailand's recent conquests came from track and field where it outshone Malaysia with 12 gold medals against the latter's 11 in Day 3.



DETPHANG Khamron of Thailand hurls the javelin en route to the silver medal.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Severino, Lopez share chess lead with 3 wins each

By NM Marlon Bernardino,
Contributor

FIDE MASTER Sander Severino and National Master Henry Lopez of the Philippines beat Vietnamese Dinh Tuan Son and Malaysian ace Meng Heng Chuah, respectively, to score their third straight wins and share the lead with FM Fidaus Maksum and Eddy Suryanto of Indonesia after the third round of the 3rd Asean Para Games chess competition at the GSIS Gymnasium in Pasay City.

Earlier, the 20-year-old Severino, a native of Silay City, Negros Occidental, outplayed Nizam Whab Kharul of Malaysia and compatriot Alexis Elinon. The 25-year-old Lopez, who hails from Panabo City, Davao, nipped compatriot Joven Malig and Derani Mahadzir of Malaysia.

"Go for win *ako*," said the paraplegic Severino, the 2001 Asean Youth Chess Champion.

Severino tackles Suryanto, winner over Mat Idris Saman of Malaysia, Rudy Sarmiento of the Philippines and He King Ho of Malaysia, in the fourth round.

Lopez, on the other hand, will slug it out with FM Fidaus Maksum of Indonesia, who demolished Rommel Flores of the Philippines, Nguyen Le Huc Vinh and Le Hoa Bin of Vietnam, in that order.

The five-round Swiss System "Combined (Physically handicapped and Blind)" event stakes two gold medals from the individual and team event.

Meanwhile, the Blindfold (team/individual) chess competition will start today after the conclusion of the fifth and final round of the "Combined (Physically handicapped and Blind)" chess event.

RP golfers finish 3rd in Putra Cup

THE EXPECTED RALLY DID NOT come and the Philippines settled for third place among seven teams in the Putra Cup handily won by Malaysia at the Pun Hlaing Golf Club in Myanmar yesterday.

Jay Bayron fired a four-under par 68 but the rest of the squad, including fancied Juvic Pagunsan, Marvin Dumandan and Michael Bibat, failed to come up with a strong finishing kick as the RP golfers wound up with a four-day aggregate of 870 after a closing 218.

That was 13 strokes off Malaysia, which cruised to a trouble-free victory with a closing two-under par 214 and an 857 for a six-shot win over Thailand. The Thais tallied an 863 after an even par 216.

The Malaysians, led by top gun Ben Leong, faltered in the third round with a 223, enabling the Thais, spearheaded by 17-year-old Anujit Hirunratanakorn, to move within four shots Friday.

But Leong and company settled down in the final round to atone for their fourth-place showing in the recent SEA Games dominated by the Filipinos.

Leong went on to sweep the titles for Malaysia as he finished with a 9-under 279 to cop the individual crown. Hirunratanakorn came in second with a five-under 283 while Bayron wound up third with a 284.

The event served as the final amateur tilt for Pagunsan, who will join the Asian Tour qualifying next year.

Nat'l duathlon today

By Jasmine W. Payo

CLARK—IT SEEMED TO BE HIS idea of a warm-up exercise.

Less than 24 hours before the national big race, duathlon champion Ryan Mendoza competed—and finished second—in a 10K fun run here in Pampanga.

Apparently, Mendoza remained confident that he has enough energy to shoot for his fourth straight title in the National Duathlon Championship today at the Centennial Expo at the Clark Special Economic Zone.

"Ryan is undefeated in all major duathlon races in the country," said Mon Marchan, secretary general of the Triathlon Association of the Philippines. "But Jeff Valdez is also motivated to win because his wife just gave birth."

Valdez, who recently competed in the World Duathlon Championship in Australia, was tagged as Mendoza's strongest challenger in the10K run-40K bike-5K run event.

Also vying to unseat Mendoza are Fil-Am triathlete Arland Macasieb, who secured a bronze in the recent 23rd Southeast Asian Games, and Tour veterans Joseph Millanes, Augusto Benedicto and Hilson Mangahis.

SEAG triathlon silver medalist Sandra Araullo is the odds-on favorite in the women's side after the retirement of defending champion Alexandra Gauzon.

Filipino wushu bets sustain fiery form

AFTER A SUCCESSFUL STINT IN the 23rd Southeast Asian Games, Filipino wushu bets continued their winning run in the recent Eighth World Wushu Championships in Hanoi, Vietnam, by bagging three gold, one silver and one bronze medals.

Rene Catalan, Rexel Nanghayna and Benjie Rivera provided the golds in the sanshou (sparring) contests as the Filipinos finished fourth overall behind China, Hong Kong and Macau in the prestigious tournament which lured 800 athletes from 67 countries.

Catalan, SEAG gold medalist in the 48-kilogram category, retained the title he first won two years ago in Macau.

"Catalan looms as one of our strong prospects in the 2006 Asian Games in Doha, Qatar," said Francis Chan, lifetime honorary president of the Wushu Federation of the Philippines who joined the national contingent in Vietnam.

Another SEAG gold winner, Nganhayna, triumphed in the 56-kg division while Rivera, gold medalist in the 2002 Asian junior tilt in Beijing, topped the 52-kg event.

De Torres rules drag race anew

ROSARIO, BATANGAS—SONNY DE TORRES of Group N -Matonetics Racing broke the 11-second barrier as he copped his second straight record victory recently in the second leg of the 2005 Red Horse-PCSO National Drag Racing Championship Series at the BRC Drag Strip here.

The 36-year-old De Torres, a seven-time champion from Lipa City, claimed the P5,000 top purse as he set a new record time of 11.912 seconds in the Quick 8 finals faceoff against Walter Pazon of rival team Blanche Racing.

He broke his own previous record of 12.034 seconds in the first leg of this event held in cooperation with the Automobile Association of the Phils. and sponsored by Red Horse, San Miguel Beer, PCSO, Petron, Sparco and supported by Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Denso Spark Plugs, Casino Filipino, GV 99.9 FM and DaBest98.5 FM.

BACK TO BACK CHAMPS: Gillette MBL Vector Cup Open division champion CKP Consultancy Services bagged another title by routing Valle 3, 107-91, in the Open Division finals of the Valle 3 Classic basketball league at the Adidas Sports Kamp in Fort Bonifacio last Saturday. (Standing from left) Brad, Ryan Tan, Morty Fong, Chan Alastre, William Ibay, Paeng Santos, Jun Tanauan, JR Naguit, Renato Echavez, Adonis Tierra (head coach), Jun Arquero, William Fong (playing team owner/manager), Jonas Guiao, Oliver Agapito, Ryan Lapid; (Seated from left) Sonny, Paolo Malonzo, JV Tierra, DJ Perlas, Fernandez kids, Jeffrey De Guzman, Boyet Fernandez, Ogie Gumatay, Joel Parcotilo, Trina Mendoza, Chalsea Ng and Macy Fong (jr. muses). The team was sponsored in part by Senco Link Technology Inc., Goldland Property Group, Ren Capital Corp., Hanford Phil., and Hawaii Java Java Coffee.

Young Guns on tomorrow

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY BOYS AND GIRLS vie for seven division titles in the fourth staging of the Young Guns 2005 Golf Invitational Tournament blasting off tomorrow at the Tagaytay Midlands course. Tee-off starts at 7:30 a.m.

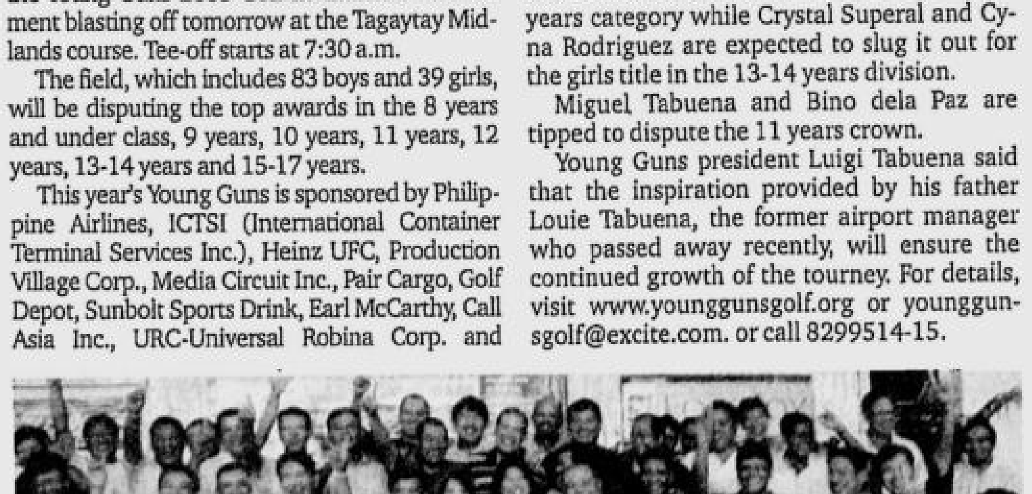
The field, which includes 83 boys and 39 girls, will be disputing the top awards in the 8 years and under class, 9 years, 10 years, 11 years, 12 years, 13-14 years and 15-17 years.

This year's Young Guns is sponsored by Philippine Airlines, ICTSI (International Container Terminal Services Inc.), Heinz UFC, Production Village Corp., Media Circuit Inc., Pair Cargo, Golf Depot, Sunbolt Sports Drink, Earl McCarthy, Call Asia Inc., URC-Universal Robina Corp. and Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club.

Manila Southwoods team mainstay Miko Yee is the solid favorite in the boys 15-17 years category while Crystal Superal and Cyna Rodriguez are expected to slug it out for the girls title in the 13-14 years division.

Miguel Tabuena and Bino dela Paz are tipped to dispute the 11 years crown.

Young Guns president Luigi Tabuena said that the inspiration provided by his father Louie Tabuena, the former airport manager who passed away recently, will ensure the continued growth of the tourney. For details, visit www.younggunsgolf.org or younggunsgolf@excite.com. or call 8299514-15.



CHAMPIONS: Members of the Alta Vista of Cebu team whoop it with the Sta. Lucia Cup after winning the overall championship in the just concluded Sta. Lucia Tour 2005. The Cebuanos, winning for the second time in three years, prevailed over Rancho Palos Verdes of Davao and Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in the three-leg, 126-round nationwide series that went through five of the country's most prestigious golf clubs.

SPORTSWATCH

1st Pichay Chess begins Monday

THE 1ST SURIGAO DEL SUR REP. PROSPERO PICHAY CHESS CHALLENGE begins on Monday at the Celebrity Sports Plaza. Organized and spearheaded by Pichay with lawyer Frank Sunga as overall coordinator, the tournament has a nine-round, Swiss System format and P500,000 in cash prizes at stake. National Master Cesar Caturla said more than 50 teams from various chess clubs are vying for the P200,000 top prize. Thus far, the tournament top guns are Grandmasters Mark Paragua and Joey Antonio. Participants must be at the venue at 8 a.m. on Dec. 19 for the team captains' meeting.

Golf Power Plus on RPN-9

GOLF POWER PLUS FEATURES AN ELIMINATION ROUND MATCH OF THE first Samsung Women's Inter-Collegiate Beach Volleyball Challenge between College of St. Benilde 4 and St. Francis of Assisi College today. The game was played at the Cantada Sports Center in Taguig City. Golf Power Plus is aired at 3 p.m., Sundays on RPN-9 and on ABS-CBN Global's TFC/Pinoy Central TV. It is supported by Samsung, Tanduay Rhum, PCSO and Mapecon. Fistorama follows at 4 p.m., featuring the bouts between flyweights Roberto Lerio and Eden Sonsona in eight rounds and bantams Ranny Andagan and Michael Romulo in four rounds.

Noche Buena derby stakes P1.3M

ROLIGON MEGA COCKPIT WILL BE THE VENUE OF NOCHE BUENA 5-COCK derby on Dec. 26, 28 and 30. The guaranteed prize is P1.3 million and a three-door Pajero. "Through the years, Roligon has maintained its image as everybody's cockpit, where anyone seeking recognition in the national cockfighting scene can join," said promoter Rolly Ligon. Admission fee is P250. Meanwhile, the Christmas Cash Premyo 3-cock derby sizzles on Tuesday, Dec. 20. At stake is P300,000. Entry fee is P4,400, according to hosts Tiling Capitan, Mario Gujelde, Jog and Michael Manuguid. For info, contact 851-2275, 852-9812 and 833-1638.

PCAP series begins Jan. 9

THE PINOY COCKERS ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (PCAP), BASED at Makati Coliseum, will stage 13 big derbies for the 2006 cock season beginning Jan. 9. Twelve 5-cock derbies and one 8-cock event are lined up to determine the PCAP Cocker of the Year. A total of P2 million awaits the winners. PCAP members include Jun Pascual, Efren Canlas, Philip Chiongbian, Edmund Yasay, Manny Pacquiao, Nelson Salvanera, Matt Bitanga, Gen. Katy Katigbak, Jet and Joel Fernando, Bobby Doromal, John Capinpin, Madlambayan brothers, Henry Villarica, Ellan Nagano, Boyet Joson, Jun Soriano, Jake and Butch Macasaet, Pepito Ngo, Tony Tan, Ito Ynares, Anita Booc, Tata Booc, Rey Briones; Roman Emil Chua, Ram Lopez, Louie Cua, Butchoy Olano, Ferdie Eusebio, Jun Marasigan, Arman Santos, William Co, Ranier Kau, Jose Orillaza, Ric de Guzman and Boy Marzo. Call 896-3545 and 895-6475.

NCA 8-Cock International tournament starts Jan. 16

JOE WOLCOTT, COCKER OF THE YEAR WINNER of sunset Recreation Club, will banner a powerhouse group of American cockers participating in the National Cockers Association (NCA) 8-Cock International derby on Jan. 16, 18 and 20 at the world-class San Juan Coliseum. "Our group is determined to win the toughest international derby in the world," Wolcott said in a message to the organizers of 2006's first international derby which will be hosted by Ito Ynares, the Firefly group, Danny Valero and R. Pineda. The NCA will stage a 7-cock derby tomorrow and on Wednesday (Dec. 19 and 21) to be hosted by Ynares and Richard Bates. Also coming in are Bruce Barnett, Fil-Am George Torres, Aster Lopez, Jimbo Cox, Andy Robertson, Damon Yorkman, Henry Navarro, Paul Fassot, Arci Coloma, Jason Campbell, Freddie R., Bryan Cochran and Crow Grave. Other sportsmen taking part include Termite and Larry Whitehead, who along with Wolcott and the Firefly Group, are the defending champions. The NCA has already drawn up the tentative schedule of derbies leading up to the second NCA International Derby on June 19, 21 and 23.

CHRISTMAS BLOWOUT: Sportshouse recently launched the Christmas Bit-Time Blowout with over P2.1 million worth of prizes. (From left) Ofelia Cunanan of the DTI, Tess Canoy Ambayec and Roy Ordiales of Sportshouse during the first weeldy draw at the Sportshouse outlet at SM Centerpoint.

Pasay 5-cocker finals today

MORE THAN 90 FIGHTS WILL SPICE UP THE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND OF PASKO na sa Pasay 5-cock derby today at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit, with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as sponsor. Pit manager Eric dela Rosa said the event will start at 1 p.m. Among the early pacesetters with two wins each are the entries of Lowell Tan of Sta. Monica Cockpit (Novaliches), Louie Cua, Ram Lopez, William Go, Boy Gamilla, Benjie Lim, Randy Sto. Tomas, Lito Roque, Boy Javier, Ramon Mancenares, Cesar Tan, Butchoy Olano, Ansel Cordura, Kalawit group and Samurai. The guaranteed prize is P1 million. Entry fee is P10,000. Call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

Langkawi Tour invites RP cyclists

THE PAGCOR CASINO FILIPINO CYCLING team hopes to get the endorsement from the Integrated Cycling Federation of the Philippines (PhilCycling) to be able to compete in the TM Le Tour de Langkawi slated Feb. 3-12, 2006 in Malaysia.

The squad has been invited to see action in the annual tournament, which offers a total prize purse of $140,000, including a separate Asian category prize list of $17,000 where the Filipino cyclists are expected to see action.

The invitation was relayed to Pagcor sports director Louie Carlos by Tour de Langkawi managing director Simon Donnellan.

The trade team includes 2004 Tour Pilipinas champion Rhyan Tanguilig, Victor Espiritu, Lloyd Reynante, Merculio Ramos and Bernardo Luzon.

Hot filly favored in rich race tilt

By Musong R. Castillo

JUGGERNAUT AND SPECIAL Edition, undefeated fillies with bright futures, head a stellar field disputing the P1.6 million 2005 Philracom Juvenile Championships over the mile today at the Santa Ana Park in Makati.

The chestnut Juggernaut, a speedball who will be under the able guidance of Jonathan Hernandez, is slightly tipped to nail a sixth straight win and bag the cool million that goes with it.

Pat Dilema handles Special Edition, a bay filly out of Gold Edition by Conquistarose, for the first time and the ace rider has the more versatile mount in the race which is the culmination of a year-long series for 2-year-olds.

Dixie The Younger, the juvenile colt champion, looms as the runner with the best chance of gate-crashing the party, especially if Pat Dilema reels Special Edition out front and tries to slug it out with Juggernaut early.

Val Dilema rides Dixie The Younger.

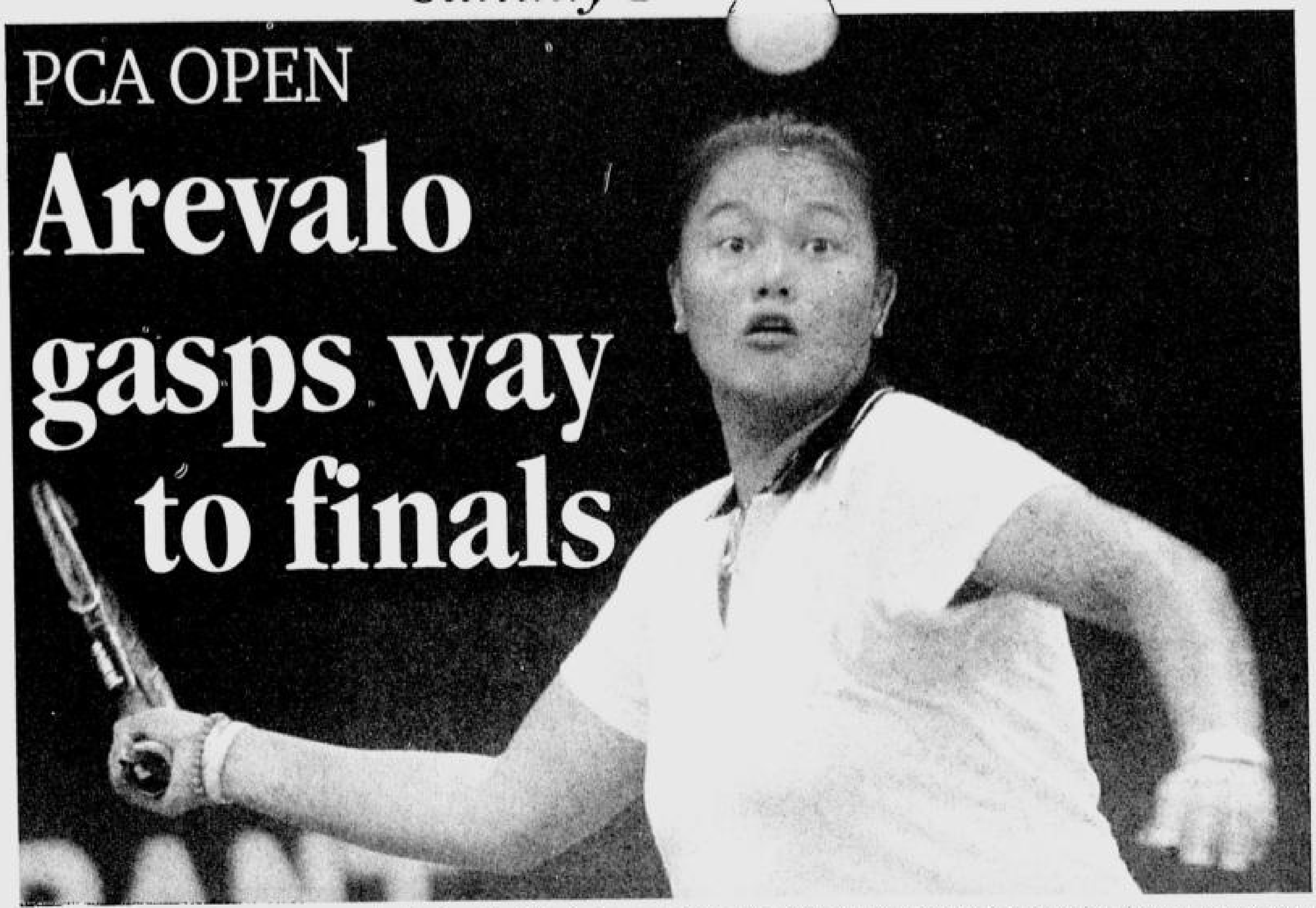
Juggernaut has been impressive in her short career to say the least, posting a smashing win in her Sweepstakes debut several months ago. This will be the biggest test for the offspring of Mr. Sutter out of Plate Lady.

A rabbit in the field, which could come from among Million Dollar, Manila's Smile, Key Element, darkhorse Jet Sutter and even Special Edition could greatly hamper Juggernaut's chances of going all the way.

Jesse Guce will pilot Jet Sutter, a stayer who could benefit greatly if a battle for the early lead ensues.

PCA OPEN

Arevalo gasps way to finals



CZARINA Mae Arevalo prepares to crush a forehand to Michelle Pang, who forced the defending champ to work hard for her victory. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Barely survives cat-quick Korean teenager

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CZARINA MAE AREVALO GOT A WAKE UP CALL from young upstart Michelle Pang before coming off with a hard-earned 6-4, 1-6, 7-6 (3) triumph to make a return to the women's singles finals of the PCA Open tennis championships at the PCA shell courts.

Arevalo survived one matchpoint and the 17-year-old Pang, who used her quickness and power to run circles around the lethargic No. 1 female netter in the country, who admitted that she's out-of-shape and is hobbled by an ankle injury she sustained during the recent Southeast Asian Games.

The 20-year-old Arevalo will try to win her third PCA Open title today against 13-year-old Bambi Zoleta, who worked out a masterful 6-0, 6-2 victory over Arra Micayabas in the other semifinals of the tourney presented by Gov. Muslim "Wahab" Akbar.

"She had a chance to win it but failed to take advantage of it," said Arevalo of her opponent who led 40-30 in the third set at 5-4.

Arevalo offered no excuse for her lack of intensity, especially in the second set where the Colegio San Agustin high school senior threatened to post a monumental upset.

"I thought I had it secured," said Pang, who is only in her sixth tournament in her career. "But I hesitated in my shots."

With the match and her reputation on the line, Arevalo used her solid groundstrokes to tie the third set at 5-5 but Pang once again made a stand by breaking her in the 11th game before the top seed broke her back for tiebreak.

The women's singles finals is slated at 11 a.m., while the men's singles championship, featuring Filipino top netter PJ Tierro and Korean defending champion Chung Hee Seok, is at 1 p.m.

Zoleta, the fourth seed in the tournament, somehow avenged her sister Bien, who lost to Micayabas (6-3, 6-2) in the second round of this tournament sponsored by Solar Sports, Accel, PVL Restaurant-Little Lawrence, PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, Sun Village, Las Palmas, Powerade, Coca-Cola, Stronghold Insurance, San Miguel Brewery, Maresa Creative Group, Cel Consolidator, PMS Ship Agency, MILS, Equitable-PCI, Burlington, Dunlop and Pixel Project.

"At first I was thinking of getting back at her but I went into the game thinking of myself," said Zoleta, a high school sophomore at the Mary Hill College in Lucena City.

Only in her first PCA Open, Zoleta displayed impressive form beyond her years which could give Arevalo a run for her money for the P30,000 top prize. Top purse for the men's final is P80,000.

Archer Amaya shines bright

AMAYA PAZ, A 19-YEAR-OLD UP psychology junior, emerged as the brightest star among Filipino archers who helped the country win the overall crown in the recent 23rd Southeast Asian Games, smashing two Philippine records equaling two others in the women's compound bow division.

Paz tallied 1373 points in the single Fita round last Nov. 30 and 340 points in the 70-meter distance a day earlier to surpass her own marks of 1366 and 334.

She also tallied 357 in 30 meters and 116 in the 12-arrow match play to tie her old marks. She posted 357 in April in Quezon City and 116 in February, both this year, in Bangkok.

"My father encouraged me to play archery because this is one sport where Filipinos could get a shot at in the Olympics," said Paz, who picked up the sport six years ago. Paz tried her hand in the recurve before shifting to compound in 2002.

Paz and fellow RP archers Abbigail Tindugan, Jennifer Chan and Joann Tabañag also established team records in the Fita round, Olympic round 3x9 and 2x27 final total.

Paz and company carded 4095 in Fita round, 252 in Olympic round (3x9) and 488 in final total (2x27) to improve their old standards of 4030, 247 and 477, respectively.

Tindugan completed the compound bow archer's record binge by shooting 347 in the 60-meter distance to better the 346 set by Paz during the world championship in Madrid, Spain, last June 21.

Shaq, Wade keep Heat scorching

O'NEAL : Double-double REUTERS

PHILADELPHIA—DWYANE Wade scored 32 points, and Shaquille O'Neal had 21 points and 13 rebounds Friday to give Miami Heat coach Pat Riley his third win this week, a 112-105 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers.

With James Posey hitting all three 3-point attempts in the first half, Gerald Fitch making a meaningful contribution off the bench and Antoine Walker sinking big 3s down the stretch, the Heat held off a late Sixers' rally to win their fourth straight game.

NBA leading scorer Allen Iverson led the Sixers with 35 points, but left the game briefly in the first half with a sprained thumb. Chris Webber scored 23 for the Sixers, who had their four-game winning streak snapped.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Vince Carter scored 34 points and Richard Jefferson added 21, including five in overtime, as the New Jersey Nets beat the Denver Nuggets, 115-106, to snap a three-game losing streak.

Jason Kidd added 15 points and 16 assists for the Nets, and forced overtime with a 3-pointer with 11 seconds left. Reserve Scott Padgett scored all of his 15 points on 3-pointers after halftime, and Nenad Krstic added 17 points and 11 rebounds for New Jersey.

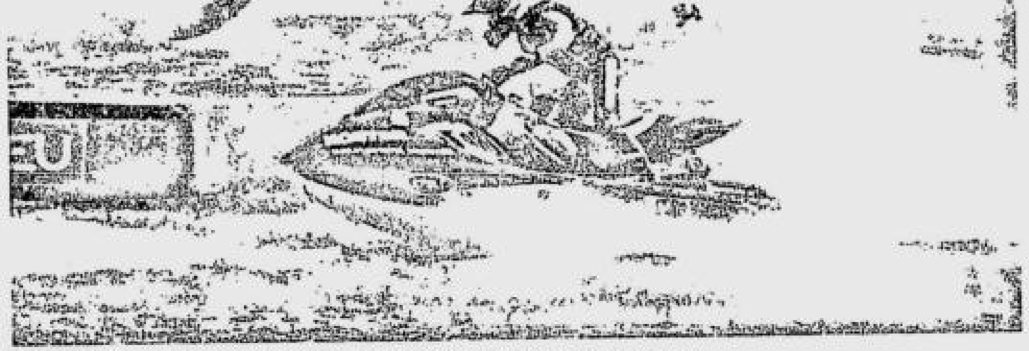
Andre Miller led the Nuggets' with 22 points and 13 assists.

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Rasheed Wallace scored 10 of his 19 points in the third quarter, and Detroit creamed Chicago, 110-82, to improve to 17-3, the best 20-game start in team history.

Rasheed Wallace added 10 rebounds and Ben Wallace had 13. Richard Hamilton scored 18 points for Detroit, while Chauncey Billups had 15 points and eight assists.

Chris Duhon led Chicago with 13 points, but Luol Deng was the only other starter in double figures with 11.

COMPLETE NBA RESULTS: Indiana 93, Utah 83; Atlanta 122, New York 111; Golden State 108, Toronto 98; Milwaukee 100, Boston 96; Phoenix 101, New Orleans 88; Dallas 109, Orlando 103, OT; Seattle 111, Portland 99; LA Lakers 97, Washington 91



PAUL del Rosario negotiates a curve in the Thailand King's Cup.

Del Rosario places third

PATTAYA, THAILAND—TWO-TIME NATIONAL jetski champ Paul del Rosario unleashed a determined fight against the world's best jet ski riders to capture third place overall recently in the 2005 Thailand King's Cup Jet Ski championship here.

Del Rosario, who came here together with team manager and coach Dong Arcilla, called it the "toughest race of my jet ski career."

Del Rosario joined a field that included veteran world champion Dustin Farthing, Australian national champ Anthony Antees, recently-crowned World amateur champion Theerawat Larhib, World Sports class champion Chaovalit Kucharoon, Texan regional champ Freddy Vaca and then defending King's Cup titlist and Thai Pro national champion Chokuthit Molee.

The Florida-born Farthing, tagged as "the Michael Jordan of Jet Ski," emerged the overall champion while Theerawat bagged the runner-up finish. Del Rosario, whose trip was supported by Networx jetsports, Petron Corp. and Manila Cordage, took third but drew the loudest cheers with his daring maneuvers aboard his Yamaha, which was an underdog on a course made complicated with multiple turns.

His impressive stint also opened doors to a stint in the Thailand National Tour next year.

Finishing fourth in race one, Del Rosario created quite a stir in Race 2 with a rare and impressive double passing stunt.

Theerawat was then poised to pass an Indonesian rider and as soon as he did it, Del Rosario made the big move to pass Theerawat amid a wild applause from spectators that included more than 50 Filipino OFW and Iloilo jetski association members who came to support him.

He then finished fourth behind Australian Antees, runner-up Chokuthit Molee and Farthing who posted his back-to-back win.

Simply amazing

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IT WAS SIMPLY AMAZING THAT SMART could handle a golf tournament so huge, participant-wise, on Wednesday at Sta. Elena. Why, I am really impressed. You don't see that kind of a so-called friendly golf event being staged with aplomb-finishing yet in flying colors. Even on the eve of the tournament, guests were reminded of their tee-off times through a text message (thanks to Willie Fernandez for that). You want a hitch-free affair, you've got to be hands-on all the way. Attaboy, Willie.

But wait, not only at Sta. Elena was the tournament held.

The Smart event was that big one-fourth of the field had to be shuttled to nearby The Country Club to play 18 holes teed off shotgun style.

Despite an inclement weather that saw drizzles competing with downpours almost all day long, nearly 300 souls braved the elements just to complete a round.

I would like to personally commend my flight mates, Rene Garcia and Edward Tiu, for having the fortitude to hang on and then to flash their toothy smiles at the end of a round that lasted almost six hours due to a course lengthened by rain.

"It's really amazing how the three of us have managed to pull it off amid the human traffic and all," said Edward, whose mean tee shot kept our flight awake despite a predominantly gray skies setting.

Golf isn't called the craziest game in town for nothing.

Come rain or shine, the golfer would plod on. Not even floods could stop him. Or thunder.

Only lightning could.

Amazingly in this tournament, nobody quit.

I heard of one who had to head to the lockers with two holes left in his round. He ran a fever when he teed off that's why.

Otherwise, everybody finished the round—proof once more that there's no crazier game around than golf.

I did quit near the halfway mark of the awarding and raffle ceremonies, notwithstanding that Verni Varga could still dish it out and The Silk band was a joy to watch and listen to.

This, despite the ribbing from Dennis Valdes that "Al is going to win the major raffle prize again, the way he did in the recent HSBC Champions tournament."

Actually, I left after I had stolen a short chat with Jennifer Rosales, who sat in a corner with her mom, Lourdes, and dear friend, Lora Roberto, away from the so-called madding crowd.

"It's nice to be home for the holidays, indeed, after staying abroad for much of the year," said Jennifer, now a certified star on the world golf stage, who partook of a no-rice dinner consisting mainly of a few thin slices of beef and light salad.

I had wanted to tarry a bit longer, but I felt it wise to leave Jennifer alone and let her savor the moment. This was her time to relax and I knew it was smart of me to let her be.

I know, there will be other nights.

***

One place I love visiting these days is Capaluhan, a beach in Calauag, Quezon, that is so virgin you can reach it only either by banca or Cadi-lakad (walking).

In this beach of pristine beauty, the main sound you hear is the sea gently rushing to the shore.

The wind blows steadily, but it is not harsh and is soft almost all day like a baby's breath.

The rustle of coconut leaves makes for a lullaby that can lull you to sleep.

The birds sing a tune much unlike the sparrow or the crow.

As you read this—God willing—I'll be there lolling in the sun and sand, in the company of such great guys and dolls like Louie Visorde, Joven & Elvie Florido, Dante & Ching Fernandez of Phoenix, Arizona, Tito & Baby Laurel of New York City, Franklin Leonor of Los Angeles, Ate Coring & Ate Lu, Ofel J. Magturo of Tustin City (Orange County) and Sol F. Juvida.

There is a time for everything and this time, I'm trying to get myself some silence.

Sssh!

You might rouse the dragon fly from her deep slumber.

***

Send comments to menju@pldtdsl.net

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MTRCB suspends cable channel

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE MOVIE AND TELEvision Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) has reprimanded two cable providers and ordered the suspension of a cable channel for airing programs "not fit for television viewing."

In a memorandum dated Dec. 6, MTRCB Chair Marissa Laguardia ordered representatives of cable providers Destiny and Sky to meet with the Board on Dec. 12 to discuss their violations for airing "sex scenes" in one of their channels.

The MTRCB has also ordered the Philippine Cable Television Association Inc. (PCTA) and the Federation of International Cable TV Association of the Philippines (Ficap) to suspend the broadcast of TVE Channel on Destiny and Sky cables from Jan. 1 to Jan. 30, 2005. (TVE Channel is aired on Sky's Channel 76 and Destiny's Channel 81.)

Destiny and Sky are members of both organizations.

A report from the Board's Monitoring and Inspection Unit (MIU) earlier noted that three "objectionable" movie trailers were shown on Dec. 5 while the program "Dios de Cine" was airing on TVE.

The trailers cited were: a woman "mashing her breast in front of a man," for the movie "Roman Polanski"; a "love scene with breast exposure," for "Austin Chick"; and "pumping scene, breast exposure and [explicit] dialogue," for "En Carne Viva."

PG rating violated

The scenes violated the Board's Parental Guidance classification, said Laguardia in a memorandum addressed to Renato F. Bautista, Destiny vice president for administration, and Juno Henares-Chuidian, Central CATV Inc. (Sky) vice president for TV programming.

In July, the MTRCB also banned the two cable operators from airing for 15 days after they were caught violating the Parental Guidance classification allowed for television.

Laguardia ordered the suspension of Sky Cable's Channel 76 and Destiny's Channel 52 (Wowow).

According to its website, PCTA—umbrella organization of cable TV operators—aims to bring up-to-date programs, information, and technology to the farthest areas in the country.

Ficap consists of 800 small-scale cable TV operators in rural areas.

KRISTINE Hermosa and Vic Sotto of "Enteng Kabisote," Canary/M-Zet Films

31st METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL

(Starting today, INQUIRER *Entertainment runs a guide to the MMFF, to help moviegoers plan their holiday cinema tour.)*

'Enteng Kabisote: Okay Ka Fairy Ko . . . The Legend Continues'

Stars Vic Sotto, Kristine Hermosa, Alice Dixson, Oyo Boy Sotto, Aiza Seguerra, Toni Rose Gayda, Melanie Marquez, Bing Loyzaga, Mariane Rivera, Ruby Rodriguez, Ariel Manalo, Jeffrey Quizon, Victor Neri, Boy Roque

Directed by Tony Y. Reyes

In past Metro Manila film festivals, Sotto starrers—"Lastikman," "Fantastikman" and "Enteng Kabisote"—were the top grossers. This year, Sotto, as Pinoy Everyman Enteng, once again invites viewers to Fantasyland—specifically, the Engkantasia of his long-running sitcom "Okay Ka, Fairy Ko."

Interestingly, Ina Magenta (popularized by Charito Solis in the old series) is now portrayed by Dixson, who played the role of Enteng's enchantress-wife Faye (now played by Hermosa) on the telly.

Familiar faces Seguerra and Rodriguez join in the revelry, along with new recruit Rivera (who is cast as Oyo Boy's love interest).

Ina Magenta's sisters Azul (Gayda) and Verde (Marquez) team up with Enteng in continuing the fight against Satana (Loyzaga) and her henchmen Drago (Neri), Kidlat (Quizon) and Clawman (Roque).

Enteng's fable takes a slight ecological turn: Satana's reign of terror causes "marine life to die; forests to wither and burn."

The Engkantasia mythology also ventures into "The Lord of the Rings" territory. In Enteng's world, the Ring is replaced with the Medalyon—"split into four and scattered throughout the four corners of the world."

The Medalyon, object of Satana's obsession and Enteng's odyssey, serves as the focal point in this battle between good and evil. *Bayani San Diego Jr.*

CHEER FACTOR

Paris H is 'worst dressed'

NEW YORK—MOVE over Mr. Blackwell.

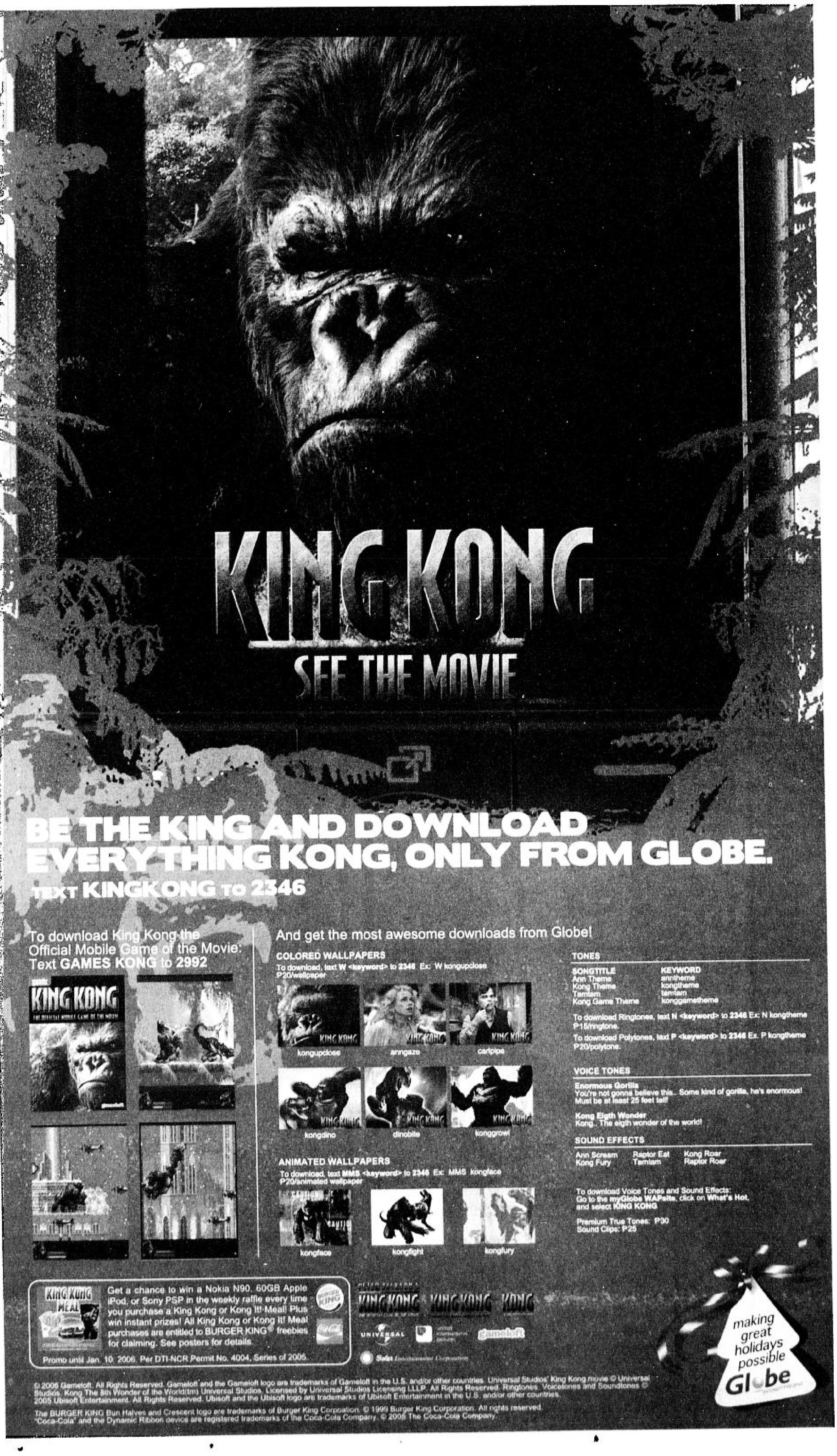
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) has issued its own "worst-dressed" celebrity list—though not based on style—and Paris Hilton has landed on top of this year's register.

Peta has cited the hotel heiress/reality TV star for wearing fur coats.

Hilton is followed on the list by her friend Kimberly Stewart, Lisa Gastineau, Victoria Gotti and Tara Reid. Of Stewart, Peta writes: "She and best bud Paris are so clueless about animals."

Martha Stewart headed last year's list, but has recently reversed course. In September, the domestic diva hosted a Peta-produced video on fur and said, "I used to wear real fur, but, like many others, I had a change of heart when I learned what actually happens to the animals."

Alicia Keys and Victoria "Posh Spice" Beckham, both previously accused by Peta, have also since said they've given up fur. *AP*



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Promo until Jan. 10, 2006. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4004, Series of 2005.

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1 KING KONG 10:40FS/11:00MF/02:30/06:00 09:10LFS/09:30LMF/12:40END
2 KING KONG 12:50FS/01:20MF/05:00 08:10LFS/08:40LMF/11:50END

MEGAMALL
1 KING KONG 12:00FS/12:30MF/04:10 07:20LFS/07:50LMF/11:00END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 KING KONG 12:20FS/01:40MF/05:05 08:15LFS/08:30LMF/11:35END
2 KING KONG 11:00FS/11:15MF/02:40/06:05 09:13LFS/09:30LMF/12:35END
3 KING KONG 10:35FS/10:45MF/02:10/05:35 08:43LFS/09:00LMF/12:05END

MANILA
6 KING KONG 12:40FS/01:10MF/04:35 07:35LFS/08:00LMF/11:00END

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 KING KONG
2 MERRY CHRISTMAS
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 KING KONG
5 KING KONG
6 KING KONG
7 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
8 THE FOG
9 KING KONG
10 KING KONG
11 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
12 THE MAN

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 KING KONG
2 THE FOG
3 KING KONG
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 KING KONG
6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
7 MERRY CHRISTMAS
8 THE MAN
9 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
10 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE MAN
4 KING KONG

SM VALENZUELA NOW OPEN
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 KING KONG

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 THE MYTH
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 KING KONG
5 HARI NG SABLAY
6 THE FOG
7 KING KONG
8 KING KONG
9 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
10 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
11 THE MAN
12 KING KONG

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 KING KONG
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
6 KING KONG
7 THE MAN
8 THE FOG
9 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
10 HARI NG SABLAY

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 THE MAN
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 THE FOG
5 CENTER POP MUSIC
6 THE MAN
7 KING KONG
8 MERRY CHRISTMAS

SM CITY MANILA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE FOG
4 KING KONG
5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
6 KING KONG
7 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
8 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
9 KING KONG
10 KING KONG
11 THE MYTH
12 THE MAN

SM SAN LAZARO
1 KING KONG
2 THE FOG
3 KING KONG
4 THE MAN
5 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
6 KING KONG

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 HARI NG SABLAY
5 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
6 KING KONG

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE MAN
4 KING KONG

SM MOLINO NOW OPEN
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE FOG
4 IN HER SHOES

SM CITY BACOOR
1 THE MAN
2 THE FOG
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 KING KONG
6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
7 KING KONG
8 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY MARILAO
1 KING KONG
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
3 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
4 KING KONG

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS
1 KING KONG
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG

SM CITY LUCENA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 KING KONG
6 THE MYTH
7 KING KONG
8 KING KONG

SM CITY ILOILO
1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
2 RESERVED
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 KING KONG
6 JED MADELA CONCERT
7 THE FOG
8 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS

SM CITY DAVAO
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
4 THE FOG
5 KING KONG
6 KING KONG

SM CITY [illegible] DE ORO
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE MYTH
4 KING KONG

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

Learning from television

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHAT YOU WOULDN'T KNOW IF YOU DIDN'T watch TV: On the ETC channel's "Today" show last Wednesday morning, we were tickled pink to view a feature on a 9-year-old Fil-Am named **Jontel Baratua**, who is being hailed in the States as a "giant-killer" in amateur pool competitions. Shades of **Efren "Bata" Reyes**? You bet.

Little Jontel delighted program hosts **Matt Laver** and **Al Poker** when he played "against" them in a demonstration pool game, and easily trounced them, no sweat at all.

He won the hearts of televiewers by just being his charming, natural and unflappable self. Even as he showed off his fancy moves, he shared that he was in the third grade, was 4-ft-11 tall, and has been playing pool for less than one year.

He's also interested in boxing, basketball—and cooking. He came into his own as a competitor after his Uncle **Charlie** taught him boxing, because it gave him confidence.

How has he done so well against competition pool players much taller and bigger than himself? "I just stand on tiptoe, so I play as well as they do."

Does he have a nickname on the competition pool circuit?

"No—well, maybe—some people call me the Master of Disaster."

And, does he ever play against his schoolmate for their lunch money?

"No way—amateurs aren't supposed to play for money." Well, is he planning to turn professional someday? "I guess."

Finally, when is he competing next? "There's a big competition in February."

How will he fare? "I think I'll do good."

Clearly, we'll be hearing a lot more about Jontel Baratua in the coming months and years.

More info-featers

THE "TODAY" show is a good source of other informative features. Recent examples we've caught on the program include a study on the safety of artificial sweeteners, an "eat-all-you can" diet that makes some people lose weight, and easy and inexpensive makeover for both people and homes.

Another reliable source of information and inspiration is **Oprah Winfrey**'s talk-magazine show which, earlier this month, did a feature on a baby girl who was born with mermaid-like fused flippers for legs.

The exceedingly rare medical condition would, in an earlier age, have tempted the girl's parents to enter her in a circus sideshow. But medical science has advanced so much that it became possible for the girl's limbs to be operated on and separated, so she can hope to become ambulatory in the near future.

Features on medical breakthroughs are eye-opening viewing experiences for many people because they show that there's always hope, even if the medical condition appears to be too complex or dire to be alleviated.

Other TV features that viewers learn from focus on the rights of women and children.

Aside from informing people about those rights, the features inspire them to do more than just wait for the authorities to act. Rather, viewers are subliminally motivated to assert themselves, so that they can get what is rightfully theirs.

Of all the lessons viewers can learn from television, this could be the most important of all.

Movies on TV

ON CINEMAX today, 6 a.m., "Any Which Way You Can." 3 p.m., "Scent of A Woman." Dec. 19, 10:45 a.m., "All the President's Men." Dec. 20 at 12:30 p.m., "Philadelphia." 4 p.m., "The Naked Jungle." Dec. 21 at 8:30 a.m., "Little Women." 9 p.m., "Cape Fear." Dec. 22 at 3:30 p.m., "The Man Who Knew Too Much." Dec. 23 at 10 a.m., "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind." 4 p.m., "Mystic River." Dec. 19 at 5 p.m., "The Matrix Revolutions." Dec. 20 at 10:15 a.m., "The First Wives Club." 10 p.m., "Rome 6: Egeria." Dec. 21 at 7:30 a.m., "As Good as It Gets." Dec. 22 at 9 p.m., "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban." Dec. 23 at 9 p.m., "The Last Samurai."

Magic Pass to Disneyland

COMPLETE your holiday shopping at Shopwise and get a chance to visit Hong Kong's Disneyland with the hypermart's Magic Pass.

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Shopwise branches are on Pasong Tamo, at Harrizon Plaza, in Antipolo, at Fiesta Supermall in Alabang, in Libis, and at Araneta Center in Cubao.

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 KING KONG MTRCB: PG-13 12:30, 4:15, 8:00 PM
2 KING KONG MTRCB PG-13 1:30, 5:15, 9:00 PM
3 KING KONG MTRBC PG-13 10:45, 2:30, 6:15, 10:00 PM
4 CHICKEN LITTLE MTRCB : GP 11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00
PREMIERE THEATRE KING KONG
MTRCB PG-13 2:00 5:45, 9:30 PM
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice
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Treat your family and friends to a thrilling movie experience only at the Shang.
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CINEMA 2 KING KONG PG13 12:35, 4:15, 7:55
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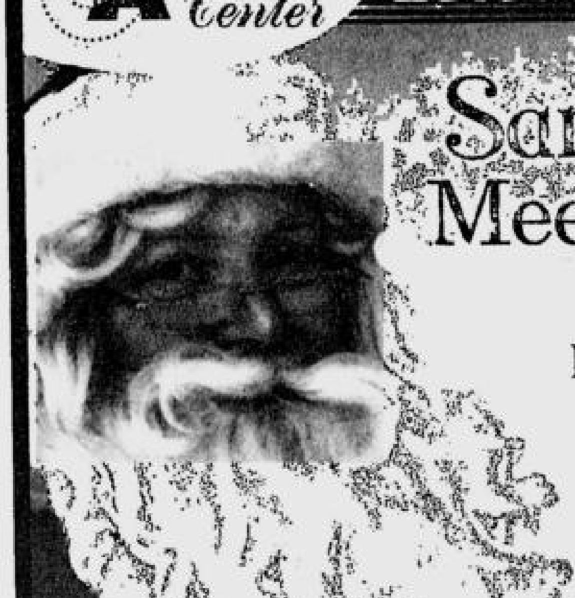
CINEMA 4 KING KONG PG13 10:50, 2:30, 6:10, 9:50
CINEMA 5 KING KONG PG13 11:25, 3:05, 6:45, 10:25
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.
MUSIC MUSEUM
January 27, 2005 JED MADELA 9PM
February 3 & 4 NINA&NYOY 9PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

Araneta Center Leisure Guide



Santa Claus Meet & Greet
December 18, 24 & 25
3:00 - 4:30 pm
Ali Mall Exchange Lobby
4:30 - 6:00 pm
Ali Mall Lower Ground Floor
3:00 - 6:00 pm
Farmers Plaza

CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway CINEPLEX 10
LEVEL 4, GATEWAY MALL
ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P150 KING KONG
P140 HARRY POTTER
GLOBE PLATINUM P249 / P299
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

KING KONG	GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA KING KONG
10:50 / 11:25 / 12:00 / 12:35 / 1:50 / 2:25 3:00 / 3:35 / 4:10 / 5:25 / 6:00 / 6:35 7:10 / 7:45 / 9:00 / 9:35 / 10:10	1:50 / 5:25 / 9:00
	CHICKEN LITTLE 12:30 / 3:30 / 4:30
JUST LIKE HEAVEN 12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20	THE FOG 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40
MERRY CHRISTMAS 6:40 / 9:30	...MAXIMO OLIVEROS 12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30

ALI MALL CINEMAS

❶ KING KONG 12:25 / 4:00 / 7:35	❹ HARI NG SABLAY 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00
❷ THE FOG 12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30	❺ IN HER SHOES 12:30 / 3:10 / 5:50 / 8:30
❸ HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET 12:00 R4 / 2:00 / 5:00 / 8:00	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS

BARNEY'S MUSICAL CASTLE *Showtime Today 1 pm & 7 pm*	SPELLBOUND MAGIC SHOW *Opens December 25*

CENTER EVENTS

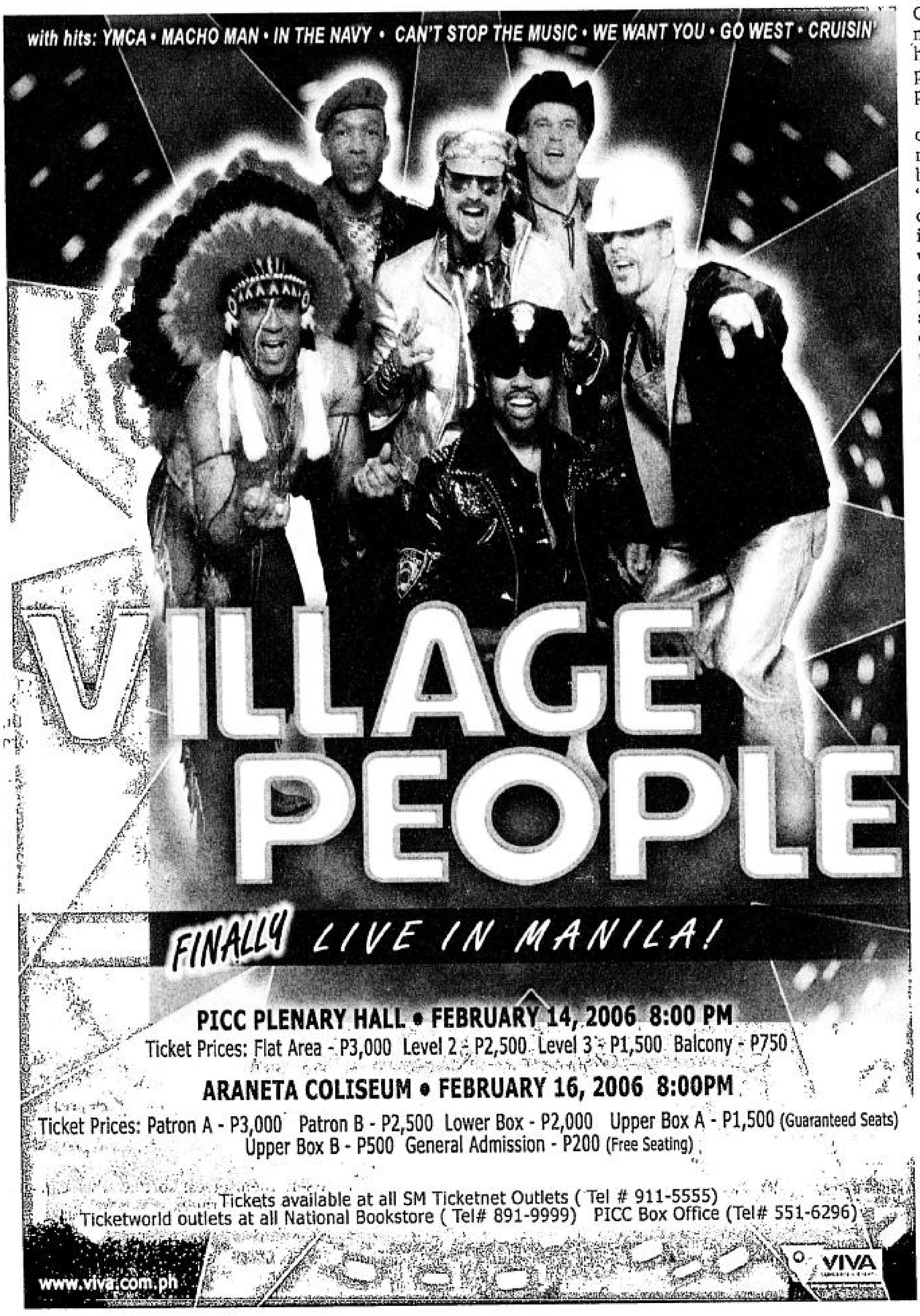
BAZAARS	*Everything Christmas Holiday Bazaar ongoing until January 8 at Level 4 of Gateway Mall*
	Absolutely Christmas Holiday Bazaar ongoing until January 6 at the Ali Mall Exchange on the Ground Floor of Ali Mall

LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

FEEDBACK

From Cecilia Lee (cecille_lee@yahoo.com), 22676 Genova, Laguna Hills, California:

Please look into this matter. Someone [who gives her e-mail address] as sexy_maria18@yahoo.com is posing as Assunta de Rossi. Her name is Carmela, but she has posted Assunta's photos on the Internet as herself. She's [telling people] that she's an orphan, with twin sisters Alessandra and Maria Marivic. She says Marivic has leukemia and they need money to pay for hospital bills. Her address is listed as 69A Grapes St., Phase 4, Grand Valley Subdivision, Angono, Rizal. She has also listed a bank account number where people can deposit their donations. [This Assunta] is asking her money from Americans here. Please advise Assunta about this, too.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Ticket Prices: Patron A - P3,000 Patron B - P2,500 Lower Box - P2,000 Upper Box A - P1,500 (Guaranteed Seats)
Upper Box B - P500 General Admission - P200 (Free Seating)

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'Me? Oh, god, I mean, I don't...'

BEVERLY HILLS—PAUL GIAMATTI was surprised to get a Golden Globe bid for his role as a boxer's manager in "Cinderella Man," but he can't envision picking up the trophy.

"What do I think of my chances?" Giamatti said with a burst of laughter. "Oh God, I mean, I don't, I, I, I don't see it happening, so I would say my chances would be — I wouldn't give myself any chances. I don't see myself actually winning anything."

Last year, Giamatti, 38, received a Globe nomination as Best Actor in a movie comedy or musical for his role as a wine snob in the sensation "Sideways," but lost to Jamie Foxx of "Ray." *AP*

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1	KINGKONG 10:55, 2:45, 6:35, 10:25 PG-13
2	KINGKONG 11:30, 3:20, 7:10, 11:00 PG-13
3	KINGKONG 12:40, 4:30, 8:20 PG-13
4	KINGKONG 1:50, 5:40, 9:30 PG-13

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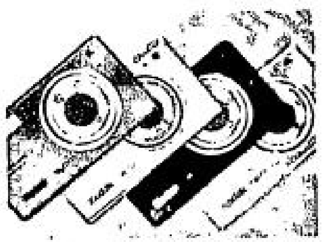

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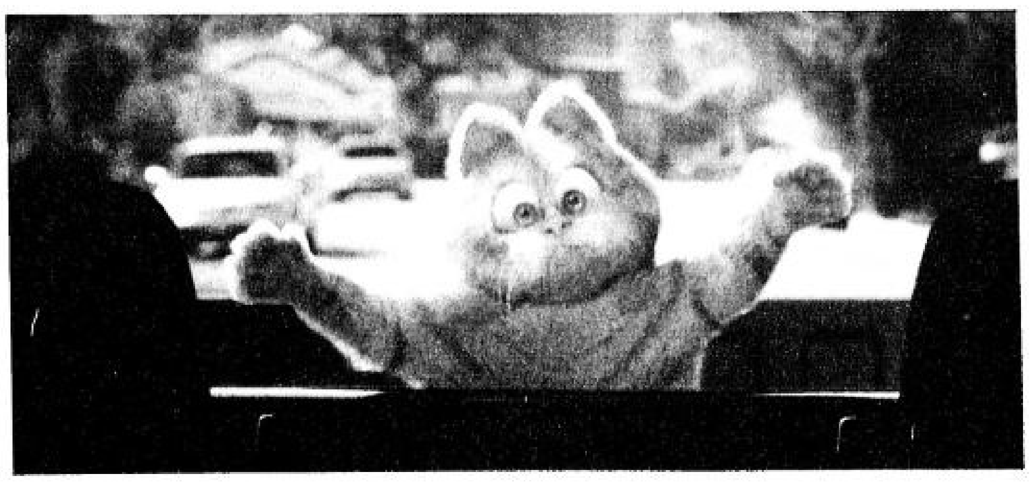


Garfield and grannies

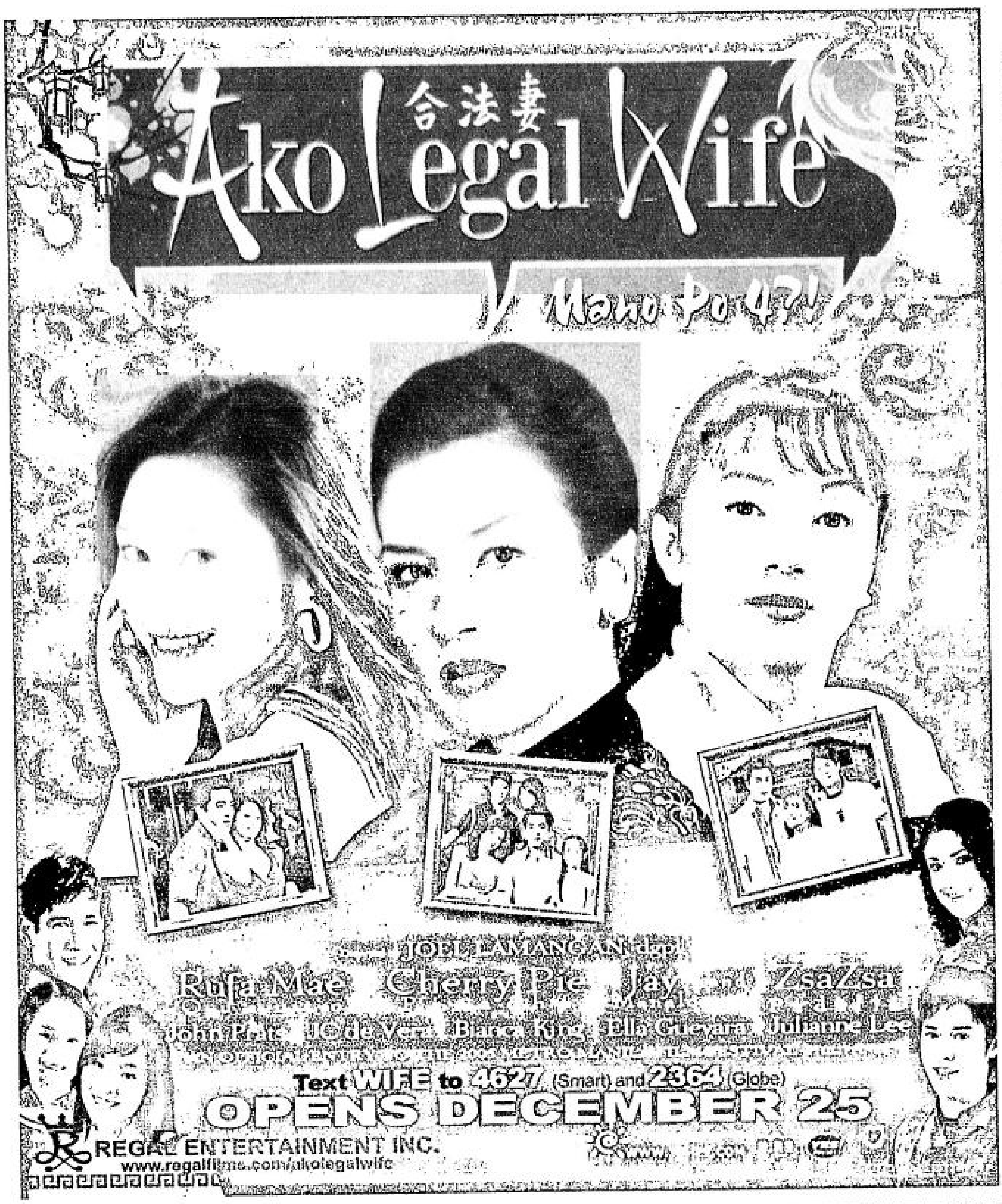
STAR MOVIES AIRS "GARFIELD" ON DEC. 25, 9 p.m. The movie stars Breckin Meyer and Jennifer Love Hewitt. Garfield, the lazy, lasagna-loving feline, is voiced by Bill Murray.

KID FIT

On QTV 11, the newest family sitcom is "Ganda ng Lola Ko!"

Featured as wacky *lolas* are Gloria Sevilla, Bella Flores and Baby O'Brien. The two other mainstays are Camille Prats and Kirby de Jesus.

Al Quinn directs; Bibeth Orteza is head writer. The sitcom airs Fridays at 8 p.m.


Ako Legal Wife 合法妻
Mano Po 4?!
JOEL LAMANGAN dgp
Rufa Mae Cherry Pie Jay Zsa Zsa
John Prats JC de Vera Bianca King Ella Guevara Julianne Lee
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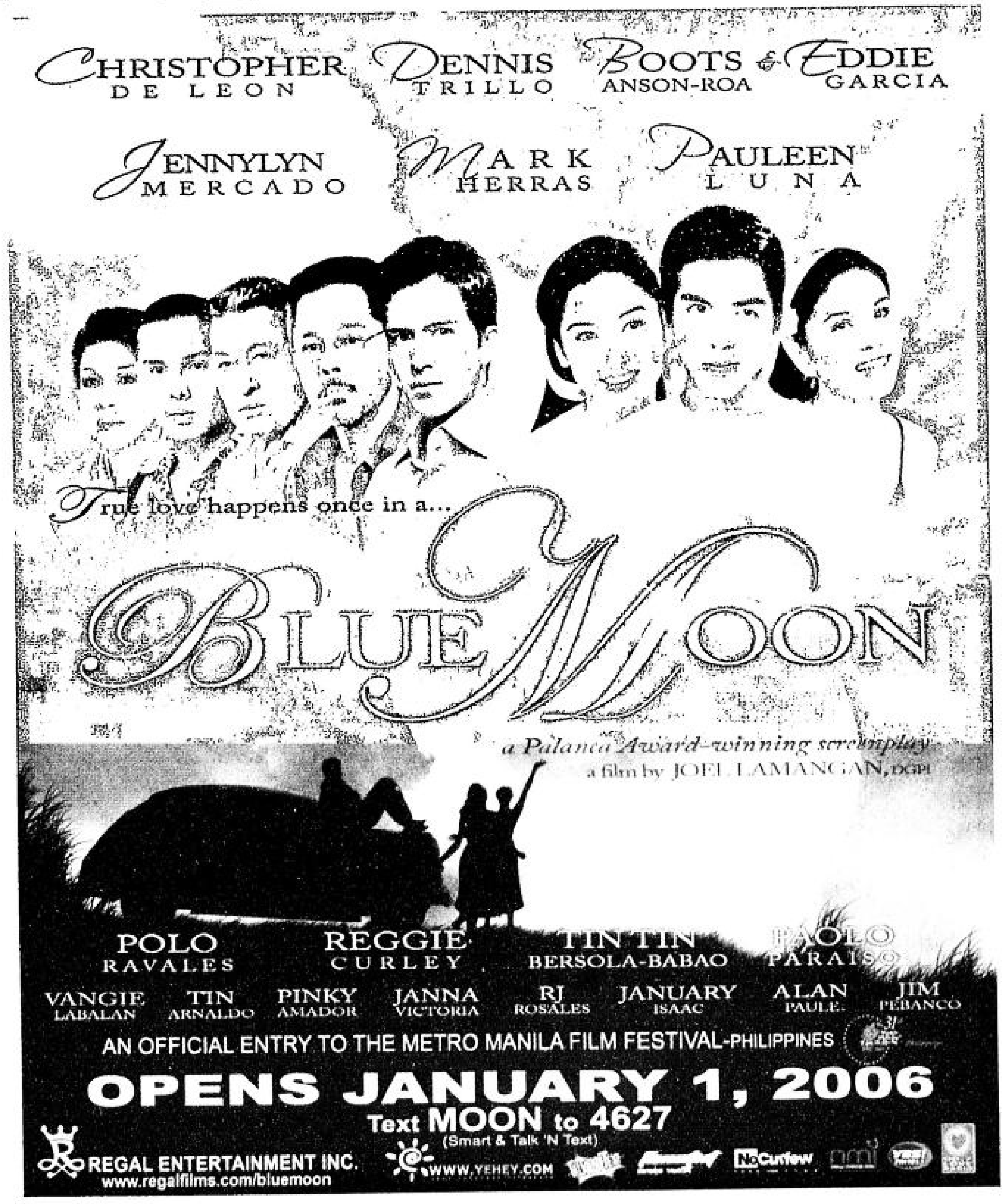
www.regalfilms.com/akolegalwife


CHRISTOPHER DE LEON
DENNIS TRILLO
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MARK HERRAS
PAULEEN LUNA
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PAOLO PARAISO
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JIM PEBANCO
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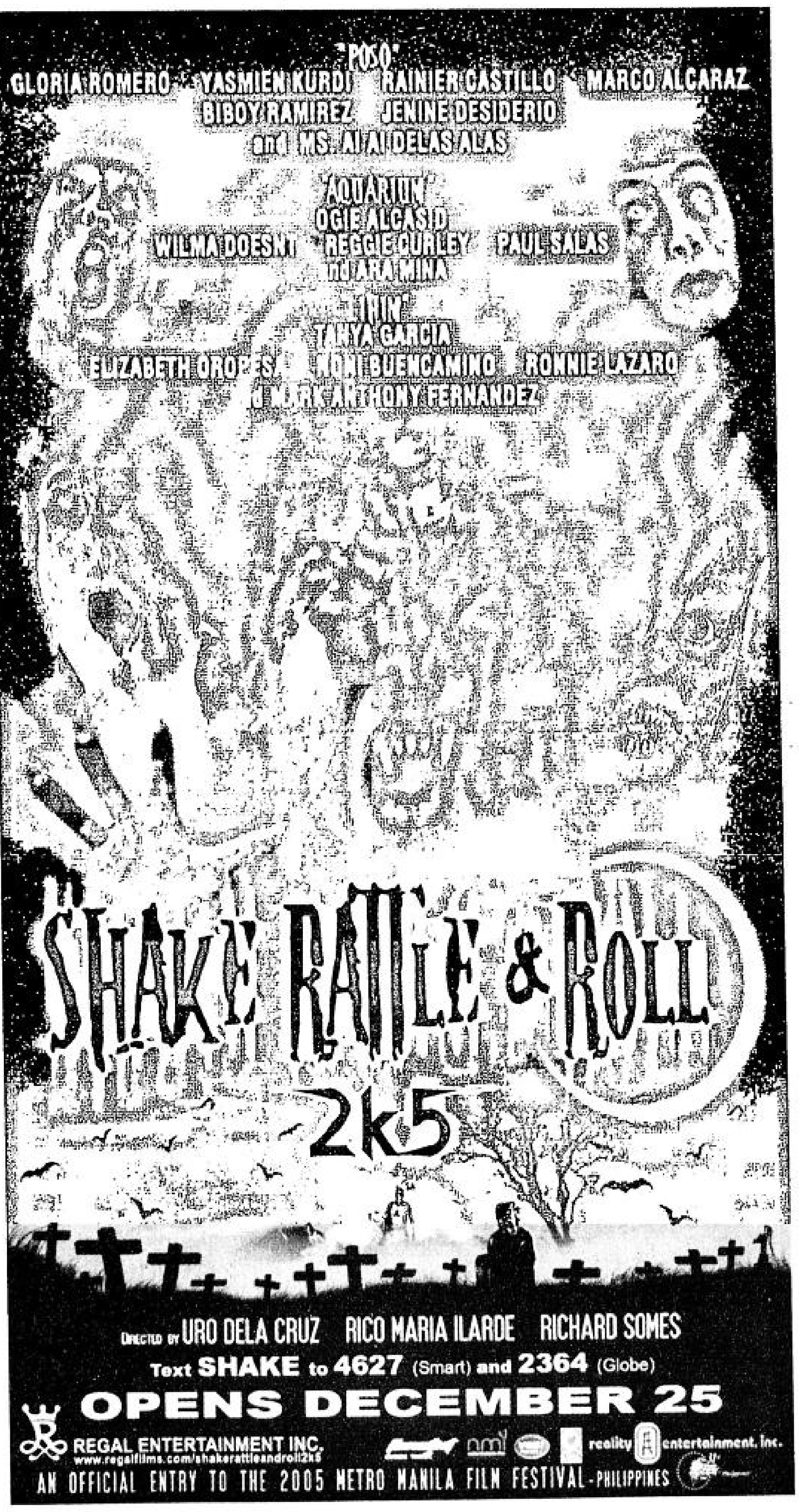
"POSO"
GLORIA ROMERO
YASMIEN KURDI
RAINIER CASTILLO
MARCO ALCARAZ
BIBOY RAMIREZ
JENINE DESIDERIO
and MS. AI AI DELAS ALAS
"AQUARIUM"
OGIE ALCASID
WILMA DOESNT
REGGIE CURLEY
PAUL SALAS
and ARA MINA
"IHIN"
TANYA GARCIA
ELIZABETH OROPESA
NONI BUENCAMINO
RONNIE LAZARO
and MARK ANTHONY FERNANDEZ
SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL 2k5
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RICO MARIA ILARDE
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At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Philippine Association of Recording Industry (PARI) Concert December 16 to 18, 2005 Christmas Fireworks Display December 16 - 18, 23, 25, 30 & 31, 2005; 9PM	Holiday Table Setting December 2 to 18, 2005 Fire In The Sky December 17 & 18	Thomas The Train Christmas Surprise December 15 to 18, 2005

AYALA GREENBELT

Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra Christmas Shows
December 17 - 18, 23 - 25, 30, 2005
Christmas Fireworks Display
December 16 - 18, 23, 25, 30 & 31, 2005; 9PM

GREENBELT Onstage

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES presents
MAN OF LA MANCHA - The Musical
at REP's GLOBE THEATER
November 11 to December 18, 2005
For inquiries, please call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM

Registration for Art Workshops now on-going at Ayala Museum
For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 loc 29.
Online registration at www.ayalamuseum.org

AYALA CINEMAS

AYALA CINEMAS

THX

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729 7777

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1 GLORIETTA 1	THE FOG	KINGKONG	ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS	AN UNFINISHED LIFE			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	JUST LIKE HEAVEN	HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	THX KINGKONG GUARANTEED SEATS	KISS KISS BANG BANG	CHICKEN LITTLE	KINGKONG	IN HER SHOES
GB1 GREENBELT 1	ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS	KINGKONG					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	THX KINGKONG GUARANTEED SEATS	THX KINGKONG GUARANTEED SEATS	IN HER SHOES GUARANTEED SEATS	KISS KISS BANG BANG GUARANTEED SEATS	JUST LIKE HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX KINGKONG	KINGKONG	JUST LIKE HEAVEN	IN HER SHOES	THE FOG		
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1 KING KONG • THX
11:30 3:10 6:50 10:30

2 KING KONG
12:40 4:20 8:00

3 KING KONG
1:10 4:50 8:30

4 KING KONG
1:40 5:20 9:00

5 KING KONG
11:00 2:40 6:20 10:00

6 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30

7 IN HER SHOES
1:35 4:20 7:05 9:50

8 THE FOG
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

9 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

10 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
12:10 3:20 6:30 9:40

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 KING KONG
1:50 5:20 8:50

2 HARRY POTTER 4 12:30 3:40
IN HER SHOES 7:00 9:50

3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

4 KING KONG
11:20 2:50 6:20 9:50

5 KING KONG
11:20 2:50 6:20 9:50

6 KING KONG
12:20 3:50 7:20

7 THE FOG
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 - 682-8199

1 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

2 KING KONG
10:25 2:10 5:50 9:40

3 KING KONG
2:10 5:55 9:40

4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00

5 THE FOG
1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

6 KING KONG
5:15 9:00

7 KING KONG
1:30 5:15 9:00

8 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 THE FOG
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN

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2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 IN HER SHOES
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5 KING KONG

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Stars 'personalize' Christmas

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Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—AS EARLY AS September, when it was still warm and Christmas was the last thing Hollywood stars were thinking about, our press group asked them about their holiday plans and thoughts.

It was one question that, for a change, every star warmed up to. Nobody frowned or balked or said, "I don't want to comment on that." In fact, everyone brightened up at the opportunity to recall their childhood Christmas or most memorable presents.

Sarah Jessica Parker may have Jewish heritage but she told us that she gets into the holiday spirit as an excuse for her family to gather. The "Sex and the City" star, along with **Diane Keaton** and **Luke Wilson** (who also shared their Yule thoughts), appear in the Christmas-themed comedy-drama "The Family Stone."

Sarah Jessica Parker

Christmas is an excuse for our very big family to get together. Our family has grown bigger—the children (she has three full siblings and four half siblings) have grown up, gotten married and now have children of their own. It really only gets better; it makes me realize how lucky I am that I have a family that surrounds my son with so much love and harmony. I think he is really privileged to know my brothers and sisters who are very special to me.

Christmas is a really wonderful time in our family. Every Christmas, we somehow manage to decide about whose house Christmas will be celebrated in. I don't know how it works out but somehow everybody does what's necessary so that 25 or 30 people are fed; there are Christmas presents for everybody; children are watched; dishes are washed; beds are made; floors are swept; good times are had. I guess that's how families function. We don't have any particular tradition of baking things but we have an order in which we open Christmas presents.

The kids never see the tree decorated. They go to bed early. We get the tree on Christmas Eve. So the kids think that Santa brought the tree because when they wake up in the morning, it's all decorated and there are presents beneath it. And Santa has left crumbs from the cookies.

My son gets very excited about it. Last year, he could not sleep at all, and when he finally did, I thought for sure he was going to be up at 6 in the morning. Well, on Christmas morning he slept until 10:30. That's the one time in his whole life (laughter) that his father and I finally had to go wake him up and say, let's see what Santa brought. My son must have been up until 2 or 3 in the morning until he was exhausted. I think this year he understands Christmas more. I tell him that if he's good, he gets two presents so it's a more modest Christmas.

MICHELLE Yeoh: All about the family

Diane Keaton

(In a black suit and hat, she was Annie Hall, updated for the 21st century)

For me, a lot of what Christmas is about are the memories. Christmas stands out mainly as what it felt like when I was a kid. It's like a tribute to the past so music plays a huge part in my idea of Christmas. I love Christmas carols because I used to sing in a choir. Every time I hear one, it just kills me so I like to keep my house alive with a lot of music at Christmastime. That brings back so many incredible memories of what it was like growing up in Southern California in the '50s which was a completely different experience than how it is now.

Luke Wilson

(In "The Family Stone," you want to know and see more of his character—Dermot Mulroney brings Sarah Jessica home for Christmas but guess which brother she ends up with?)

The thing I miss about Christmas is having my grandparents on both sides around ... as well as my aunt, who has also passed away. It was fun because we played a great football game every Christmas. All through the '70s and '80s, friends and relatives got married and started having their own families. But a lot of our friends are getting divorced now so the Christmas football game is coming back with all these guys who are single again (laughter) coming back into the fold.

The Christmas gift that I remember the most came when my dad had me reach into a pillowcase and there was a puppy. That was pretty great!

Also, my mom is a photographer. The last couple of Christmases, she gave us great pictures of different people from the family. She probably has thousands of pictures so it was great that she gave us some really good, choice pictures from her collection that are fun to look at.

Will Ferrell

(A riot in "The Producers," he gamely taps into his wife Viveca Paulin's Swedish heritage for the family's holiday celebration.)

This year, in our family, we are going to have our Swedish Yule Fest for the first time in our house in Los Angeles. I am going to be the Swedish Tomten (Santa). I have the special suit and I'm getting ready. I'm really looking forward to scaring the sh*t out of the children (laughter).

We open the presents on Christmas Eve, as done in most European countries, not on Christmas day. I enjoy doing that because on Christmas

STARS/ A3-2

WILL Ferrell, Swedish Tomten

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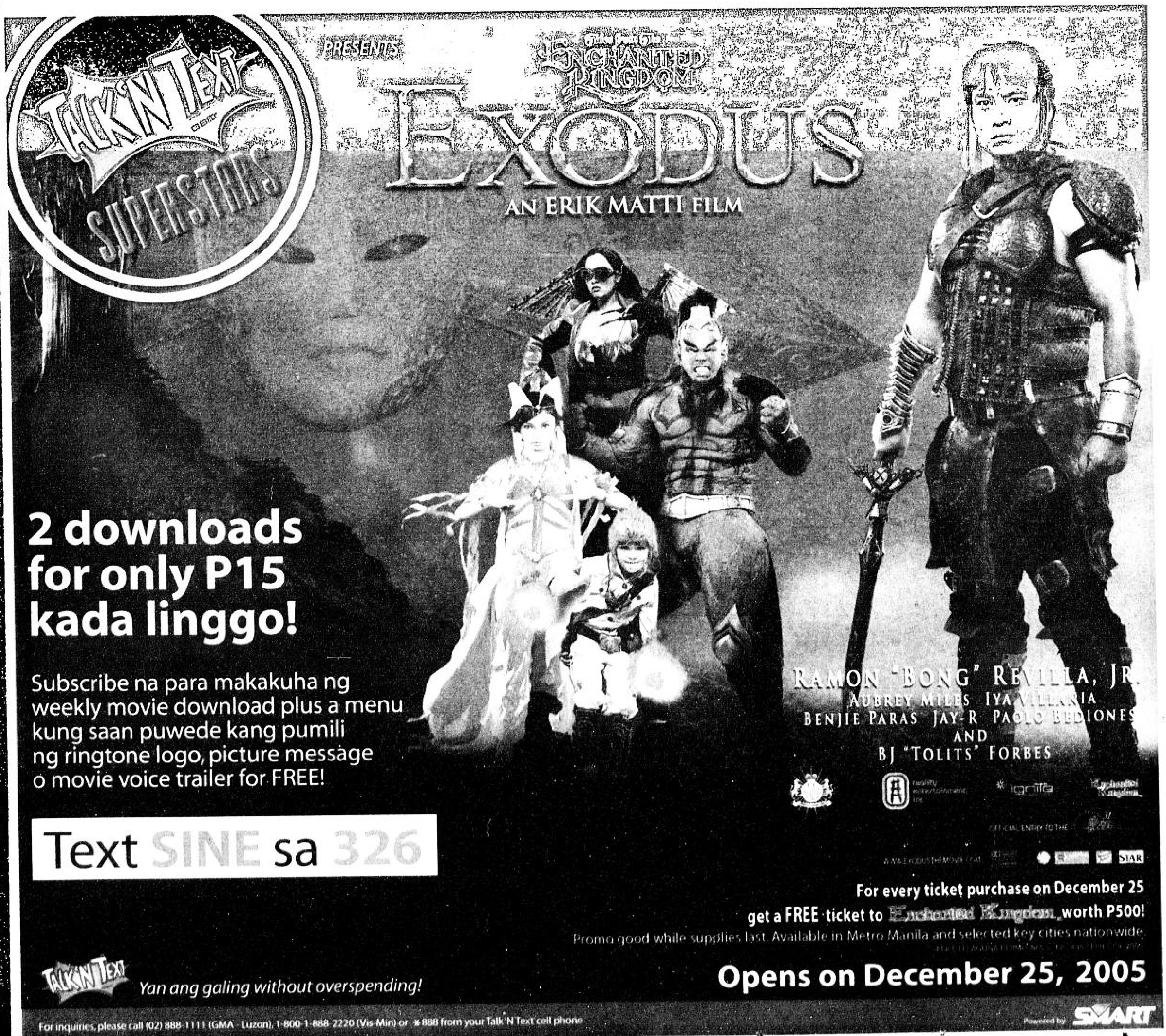

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Ernie Garcia in "Balla!Balla!" at **Makuhara Restaurant and Bar** #1969 Leon Quinto St., Malate; 7 p.m.

"Barney's Musical Castle Asia Tour 2005" at the **Araneta Coliseum**; 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.

"Bacharach Dreams" with Jake Ma Jalosjos, Nino Alejandr and Michael de Mesa a Amorsolo St., Makati

Sugarfree at **Metropo** 4 p.m.

Philippine Youth Sy **Alabang Town Center** w and **Marco Pascual**

ERN

Tomorrow

9th Avenueat **Virgin**

"Barney's Musical C 2005" at the **Araneta Co** and 7 p.m.

December 20

Philippine Madrigal homecoming Christmas **CCP Little Theater**; 7:3

Cadio at **Quisine**, 67 Makati; 8:30 p.m.

Dimsum at **Suburbia** **604**at **Virgin Café**

"Barney's Musical C 2005" at the **Araneta Co** and 7 p.m.

Philippine Youth Sy **Rockwell Concourse Le** **Ionco**

Pure Sounds at **Elbo** Metrowalk, Pasig

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6 GOLD (SDDS) KING KONG
7 GOLD (DOLBY) JUST LIKE HEAVEN
8 [illegible] EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
9 [illegible] THE MYTH
10 [illegible] HARRY POTTER-4

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3 (DTS) JUST LIKE HEAVEN
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"Barney's Musical Castle Asia Tour 2005" at the **Araneta Coliseum**; 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.

December 22

Bedazzled III Christmas Special at **Club Mwah!**; 10:30 p.m.

Drizzleat **Suburbia**

Freestyle and **Freeverse** at **Virgin Café**

Route 70 at **Merk's**, Greenbelt 3.

Stringzkin at **Elbow Room**, Metrowalk, Pasig

December 23

"Hun Mulan Fantasy Magical Journey," an acrobatic and magical show, at the **Aliw Theater**, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 911-5555 or 891-9999.

Bedazzled III Christmas Special at **Club Mwah!**; 10:30 p.m.

Shayne with **Brown Sugar Factory** and **First Circle** at Suburbia

NTwine and **Michael Angelo** at **Virgin Café**

Route 70 at **Merk's**, Greenbelt 3.

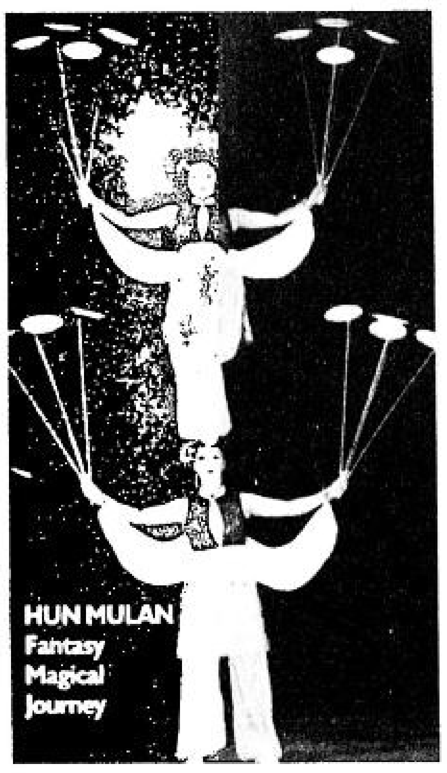
Joyride at **Elbow Room**, Metrowalk, Pasig

December 24

"Hun Mulan Fantasy Magical Journey," an acrobatic and magical show, at the **Aliw Theater**, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 9115555 or 8919999.

Bedazzled III Christmas Special at **Club Mwah!**; 10:30 p.m.

Human Race at **Suburbia**



HUN MULAN Fantasy Magical Journey

Bliss Acoustic at **Elbow Room**, Metrowalk, Pasig

December 25

"Hun Mulan Fantasy Magical Journey," an acrobatic and magical show, at the **Aliw Theater**, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 9115555 or 8919999.

December 26

"Hun Mulan Fantasy Magical Journey," an acrobatic and magical show, at the **Aliw Theater**, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 9115555 or 8919999.

Silk at **Suburbia**

9th Avenueat **Virgin Café**

December 27

"Hun Mulan Fantasy Magical Journey," an acrobatic and magical show, at the **Aliw Theater**, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 9115555 or 8919999.

Fire dancers and a surprise band will grace Oakley and Reef Party at Club Paraw in Boracay

Cadio at **Quisine**, 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati; 8:30 p.m.

Dimsum at **Suburbia**

604at **Virgin Café**

Pure Sounds at **Elbow Room**, Metrowalk, Pasig

December 28

"Hun Mulan Fantasy Magical Journey," an acrobatic and magical show, at the **Aliw Theater**, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 9115555 or 8919999.

"Rico J. Puno and Friends" at **Coriks Bar**, Kingswood Arcade, Vito Cruz Ext. corner Pasong Tamo. Call 7241762.

Freeverseand **South Border**at **Suburbia**

Dimsumand **Akafellas** at **Virgin Café**

Wednesday Jazz Festival with Eddie K, Richard Merk and **Sandra Lim** at **Merk's**, Greenbelt 3.

ire dancers and a surprise band will grace Oakley and Reef Party at Club Paráw in Boracay

December 29

Stylistics in "The Greatest Hits Live" at the **Philippine International Convention Center** (PICC). Call 9115555.

"Hun Mulan Fantasy Magical Journey," an acrobatic and magical show, at the **Aliw Theater**, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 9115555 or 8919999.

Route 70 at **Merk's**, Greenbelt 3.

Stringzkin at **Elbow Room**, Metrowalk, Pasig

December 30

"Hun Mulan Fantasy Magical Journey," an acrobatic and magical show, at the **Aliw Theater**, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 9115555 or 8919999.

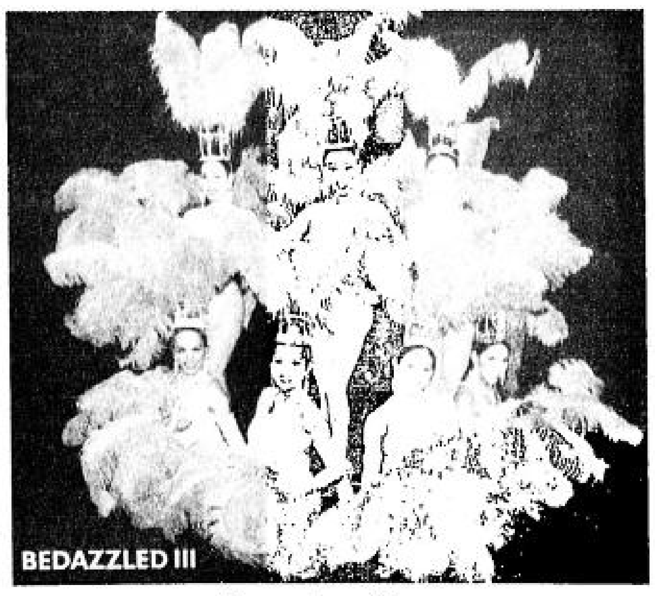
Stylistics back-to-back with **Marco Sison, Hajji Alejandro, Rey Valera** and **Rico J. Puno** in "The Greatest Hits Live" at the **Philippine International Convention Center** (PICC). Call 9115555.

NTwine at **Virgin Café**

Route 70 at **Merk's**, Greenbelt 3.

Livewireand **Twisted Pair** at Suburbia

Joyride at **Elbow Room**, Metrowalk, Pasig



BEDAZZLED III

December 31

"Hun Mulan Fantasy Magical Journey," an acrobatic and magical show, at the **Aliw Theater**, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 911-5555 or 8919999.

New Year's Eve Party at the Hyatt Regency Manila with **Rhythm & Babes**; 10:30 p.m. Call 8331234 local 8060.

Stars 'personalize' …

From page A3-1

day, you can just relax. That's nice.

Reese Witherspoon

(She uses her voice as country singer June Carter in "Walk the Line." Her recent Golden Globe Award Best Actress nomination was well-deserved.)

At Christmas, we (she and her husband, actor **Ryan Phillippe**) always have the ritual of the kids having pictures with Santa at the mall (laughing) which is fun. Last year, we managed to have **Ava** smiling and **Deacon** screaming, which was a classic. So we'll do that again. We have a regular Christmas. The family comes to town. It's always fun. I cook a lot, including a big turkey. I make all the extras. I also like to bake pies.

Catherine Zeta-Jones

I'll be with my family. Our house is already decorated. Christmas is one of my favorite holidays. I go completely over the top but that's another story (laughter).

Sienna Miller

*(She stars with **Heath Ledger** in the entertaining romp "Casanova" and is back in the arms of her husband, actor **Jude Law**.)*

What do I want for Christmas? My two front teeth. No, I'm kidding. Just lots of turkey. I love my food (laughing). I want a big, fat Christmas dinner. And lots of wine while sitting in front of the fire. All the old Christmas movies come out. I love cashmere socks—you can never have enough of those.

I've got a lot of presents to give. Maybe a piece of art for my mum. She loves art. A nice book for my dad. I'm a last-minute person so I'm now nervous because I haven't bought anything.

Michelle Yeoh

*(She shed tears in the middle of her answer to my question on how she felt as an Asian actress to be starring with **Gong Li, Ziyi Zhang** and **Ken Watanabe** in a major Hollywood movie, "Memoirs of a Geisha." The former Miss Malaysia and Bond girl was moved when she recalled for us the moment when she and her fellow Asian actors met for the first time with the movie's producer, **Steven Spielberg**, who told them they were the best. A colleague of mine handed Michelle a tissue so she could wipe away her tears.)*

Christmas is magical because you have Santa Claus and the gifts to the kids. It's all about the family. As for the presents, it doesn't matter what it is. But you feel like you've been thought of or remembered if someone gives you a card or a gift.

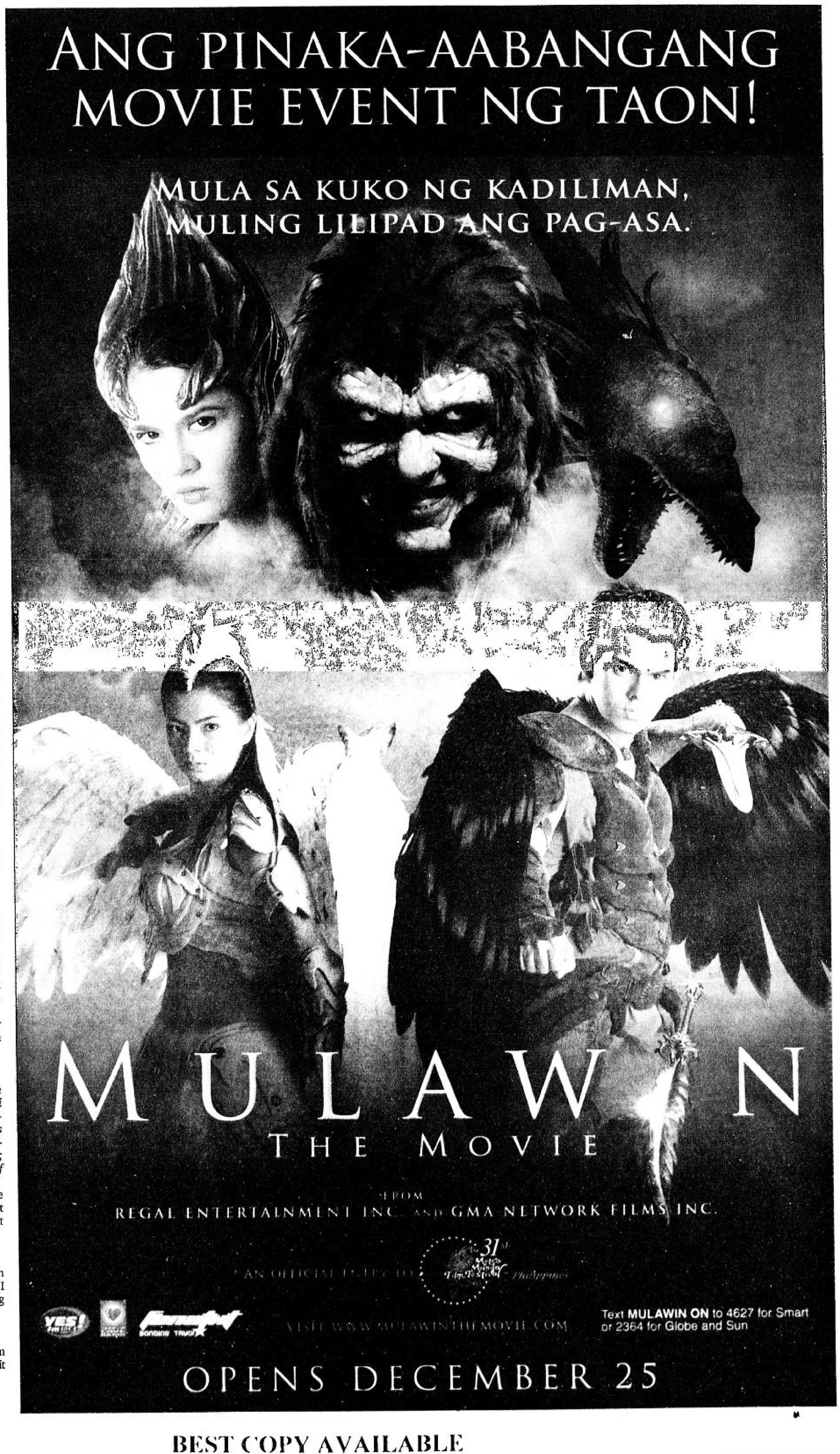
Gong Li

What would I like to receive? I would appreciate a card from someone wishing me well. As for what I give to other people, I also give cards. But I also give a purse or a wallet, especially a big one so it will bring more money to that person.

Ziyi Zhang

What would I give to a gentleman? A scarf to keep him warm in winter. For myself, I don't mind what the gift is—as long as it is from the heart.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.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ALICE DIXSON
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JEFFREY QUIZON AND VICTOR NERI
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DIRECTED BY TONY Y. REYES
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OKAY KA FAIRY KO...
THE LEGEND CONTINUES
CHRISTMAS DAY 2005
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2005
WATCH THE MALL TOUR ON DEC. 18 (SUN) @ SM BICUTAN, 4:00 PM.

ROUNDUP

Sad ending

NEW YORK—IN THE DOZEN YEARS BETWEEN that sunny summer afternoon at Jones Beach and a frigid winter morning in the Bronx, life went terribly wrong for Lillo Brancato Jr.

It was in July 1993 that the handsome teen strolled out of the Atlantic Ocean and into a Hollywood career. A casting director on the beach was blown away by the kid's dead-on impressions of Robert De Niro and Joe Pesci. The young unknown was hired to star opposite his idol, De Niro, in the movie "A Bronx Tale."

Last weekend, Brancato, now a 29-year-old with a serious drug habit, got caught in a burglary attempt with another man and ended up in a gun battle that left a police officer dead, authorities say. The actor is facing murder charges.

"This is deeply disturbing news, a tragedy beyond comprehension," De Niro said in a statement. *AP*

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Scarlett on Woody

BEVERLY HILLS—"Match Point" star Scarlett Johansson is glad that director Woody Allen emphasizes words, not action.

"He just really rarely requires that his actors go to the gym, which was a plus for me. And I didn't have to hang from a 50-foot building," Johansson, 21, said after earning a Golden Globe supporting actress nomination.

"I think Woody's dialogue helped me to bring out one of the better sides of my acting," she added. "The dialogue is so fantastic, that you think if I screw this up, I'll really be a putz." *AP*

Ridiculous concept

NEW YORK—MORgan Freeman says the concept of a month dedicated to black history is "ridiculous." "You're going to relegate my history to a month?" the 68-year-old actor says in an interview on CBS' "60 Minutes" to air Sunday (Monday in Manila). "Black history is American history."

Black History Month has roots in historian Carter G. Woodson's Negro History Week, which he designated in 1926 as the second week in February.

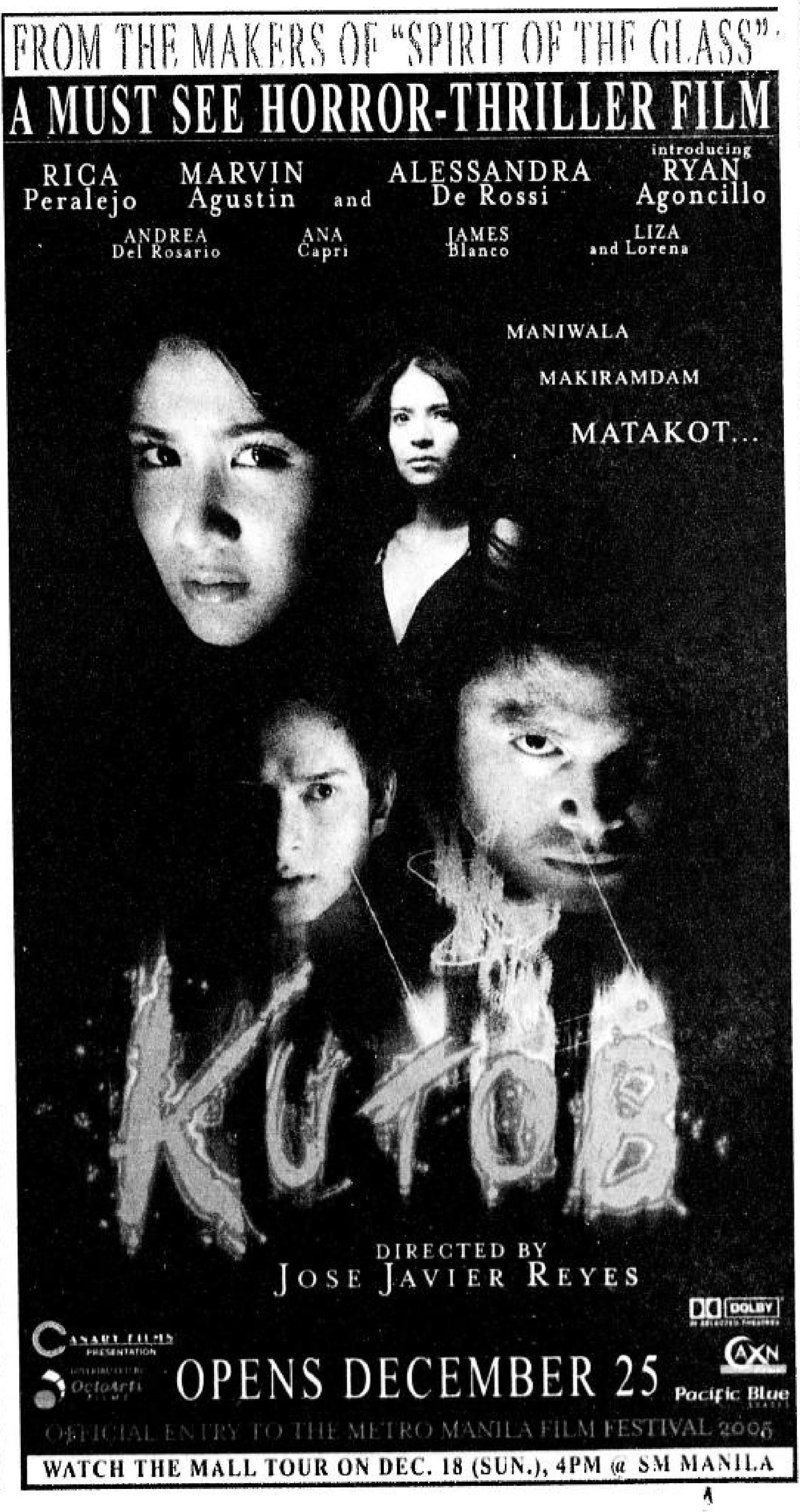
Freeman notes there is no "white history month," and says the only way to get rid of racism is to "stop talking about it." *AP*

No. 1 on the Net

LOS ANGELES—FOR the third time in four years, singer Britney Spears is No. 1—as far as Internet users are concerned.

Spears, 24 topped Yahoo's annual list of the most-searched for names on the Internet. She was beaten last year by primetime singing contest "American Idol," but topped the list the two years before that. *Reuters*

SILA ANG KAKAMPI
INA VERDE
INA AZUL
VERDANA
INA MAGENTA
BENOK
PRINSIPE K
AIZA
Enteng Kabisote 2
OKAY KA FAIRY KO...
THE LEGEND CONTINUES
SILA ANG KALABAN
SATANA
DRAGO
CLAWMAN
KIDLAT
CHRISTMAS DAY 2005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'Leave media alone, you are no winner'

AT home, reading his favorite newspaper PHOTOS BY RAFFY LERMA

The very casual Mike Enriquez

TAKE FIVE

'I never planned to go on-cam; I don't have what you might consider a face for TV. People asked me to, but only because they were desperate'

"IMBESTIGADOR" MIKE ENriquez has just been named one of six local television personalities "who rank highest in respectability, responsibility and child-sensitivity." The selection was made by Anak TV Seal jurors—bishops, college deans, school principals, head teachers, parents, NGO leaders, media men, business executives and government personnel—who conducted a nationwide search.

It is not the first award that Mike received as a professional—he's been cited here and abroad for exceptional work—but it is one that he is likely to hold close to his heart.

Anak TV Seal is an initiative of the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children and Television, whose aim is to raise the quality of television shows, especially those that are likely to interest children.

"We have no kids, but my wife [Lizabeth] and I both love children," Mike recently told INQUIRER Entertainment.

We sat down to a quiet lunch with the very visible and very recognizable broadcast man. Did we say "quiet"? Well, that was the intention. Since he is also the very approachable sort, the restaurant crew—maître d', receptionist, waiters—walked past our table a little more often than necessary. Imagine if we had met at the lobby café.

"Oh, it happens even in airplanes. Fortunately, I usually fall asleep almost as soon as I buckle up," Mike said, laughing. The lunch would be punctuated by that trademark guffaw, in fact, and conducted in practically the same manner that he does his radio show (and sometimes, even the news): packed with information, but breezy; high on credibility, but casual.

This conversational style, how do you make it work for you as a broadcaster?

Most people expect commentary to be hard-hitting, angry, loud ... I do that, too, but from time to time I will insert a humorous line. I came from humor radio, dwKC. And off the air, I work with a humorous bunch of people. On radio in the morning, especially, when people are just starting their day and the stories are heavy enough, I feel I have no business aggravating the listeners. On the contrary. This morning I asked a friend of mine who is a priest to give me a prayer for the times. He did, and I read it on the air, may background music *pa*. The listeners liked it. They said we should do that more often.

What else do your listeners call you about?

The people are tired of what's happening in the country. They want us to address gut concerns ... *singil sa koryente*, prices of goods... *derecho sa bituka*. The best commentators on radio are the listeners. They are the ones who go through the traffic every day, they have to work for survival on a daily basis. People in the news are usually those who eat three, five times a day and live in air-con castles. So the listeners, *madalas galit sila*. At the same time, they want to discuss it. Radio, more than television, is the prime source of information, inspiration ...you name it. I'm a radio boy.

Apart from reach, what does radio have over TV?

From a host's point of view, *ha*? The program is mine. When I flick on the mike, *ako lang ang nagsasalita. Sa* TV, *me* producer, *me* editor, *me* news director, prompter *at kung anu-ano pa. Sa radyo, pag nagkomentaryo ka, sa 'yo talaga 'yon.*

How did you decide to go on cam

Like most developments in my career, it wasn't planned. In 1995—it was an election year—we were brainstorming on coverage. I was there for the radio component. It turned out, we were short on male TV anchors: The coverage was just two weeks away. I kept throwing names on the table—then one of the guys said, "Mike *mag*-anchor *ka na*!" My response was, "Is this your idea of a joke?" Let's face it ... my face is not what you might call a TV face, right?

But that guy was not kidding. What everybody was, was frantic. So, *ayun* ... my first partner was Karen Davila. I was so ner-

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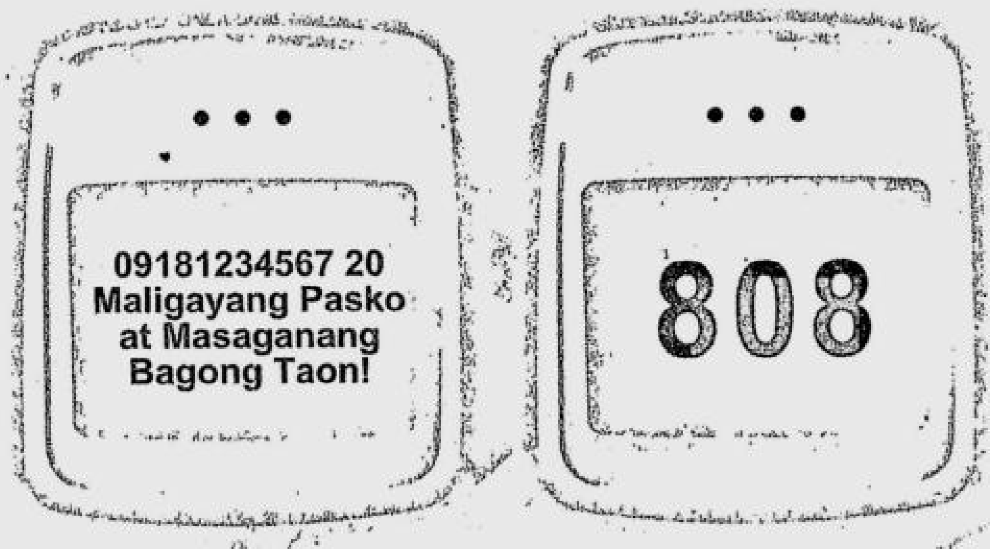

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The very casual Mike Enriquez

MIKE and Baby in the special place where they "always sleep soundly and wake up refreshed."

From page A2-1

vous—as in, I almost urinated in my pants when the director shouted, "Stand by!" Karen—she's a Christian—said, "Come, let's pray." So she took my hand, but dropped it. "It's so cold!" she said.

That afternoon when I went home, I felt drained. I didn't think I would work for the next two weeks. But I got a call that night. "Sir, they want you to anchor again tomorrow."

What do you think you did that was so good?

I ... barked? No, nothing. What you see me doing now, that was it. After the elections, I went back to radio operations—my real job at GMA. After a few months, again I was called to a meeting. They said they wanted an afternoon news program that I could anchor with Karen—15 minutes, tight, headlines *lang*. That was the original concept of "Saksi." Again I said, "Is this your idea of a joke?" So that's how we originally did "Saksi." But we soon had the ratings... and awards... before I knew it, I had a TV career. (He currently anchors "24 Hours" with Mel Tiangco.)

Let's go back to your not-for-TV face.

I'm not ashamed to say I was not "discovered," like someone came up to me and said, "Pare, *pang*-TV *ka*. People came to me because they were desperate. So I have my own makeup artist, si Manang Zeny [Lee]. She's the only one who knows how to make me look good on TV... I mean, you know *naman* my skin, my nose... it's not like it's a secret.

Si Manang Zeny, bless her... she's assigned to me permanently. When she can't come with me some place, she hands me the makeup kit with numbers—1, 2, 3—*sinusunod ko lang ang* sequence *ng pag*-apply. *Kahit sa mga* racket *ko, mga* corporate affairs, *ganu'n*, Manang Zeny is written into my contracts.

What's your car like? Gadgets galore *ba*?

My only concession to technology is a remote for the radio. I always take the back seat because I have security. It's a requirement—I shouldn't sit in front. I'm always on AM [radio]. On a weekend, I might listen to music or any FM station of my choice. Otherwise, even my FM station is GMA's dwLS.

Are those your alone moments?

Hindi naman 'yun lang. I go to the movies with my wife—and a security. She gets annoyed sometimes. When she gets carried away, she cries. *Ako*, I get excited over the editing, the cinematography, the special effects. *Sasabihin ni* Baby (Lizabeth's nickname), *"Ano ka ba naman!"*

You're noisy in the movie house?

Ah, *hindi*. Not at all.

Are you expected to always say something sensible?

Even though I'm not, I feel I should. The profession requires it. It is a position of trust. That's how I look at it; I don't know about others. People ask me for help; I'd better behave. *Ang* currency *ko* as a broadcaster, credibility. Also, I'm identified with a news organization. If I am rude to the waiters here, for example, everyone else in GMA may be judged by my example.

How much different are you from a movie star?

Not much difference in many aspects, actually. *Me chismis, intriga. Me* bad-hair days that I should ignore altogether because people have enough goodwill to greet me wherever they see me. I should have as much goodwill to greet them back.

What advice can you give to people who want to go into broadcasting?

Magpa-assign *muna sila sa radyo*. Good training. *Magpa*-assign *sila sa sunog. Matuto silang mag*-describe *ng sunog na walang* video. *Sa* TV, *i*-roll *lang ang* video, *sabihin mo, eto ang nangyari, tapos ang kwento.*

Do you sleep well?

I am the type *na madikit lang ang likod, tulog*. When I fly, once I'm in my seat, *magigising na lang ako, nâka*-take off *na! Tapos, di maiwasan*, some fellow passengers want to socialize...

Aha, you also need leave-me-alone moments!

Oh, yes. Sometimes, when my wife is abroad, I go to a coffee place and just sit there, reading a magazine. I know this place where people don't make a fuss.

What about your kids?

No kids. We've been married 28 years

Is that good, given your kind of job?

Well, it has its upside and downside, as you can imagine. We're a couple that loves children ... that's bad. On the other hand, whenever we feel like it, Baby and I can just pack our bags and leave.

Where do you go?

Cebu, Palawan ...

This lifestyle's fine with Baby?

If she has complaints, I don't hear them. She's my best friend. She's very supportive. When I have a difficult decision to make, she is the one I text... and she will text back. She used to work. Now, she enjoys staying home. And she watches all my programs. Curious thing is, her impressions are reflected in the ratings. When she says this or that episode is good, you can bet the ratings will show that. We discuss things, sometimes argue, but in the end she tells me, "Whatever you say, I'm there." *Kaya nga* my old radio moniker was "Baby Michael" *e*. Girlfriend *ko pa lang siya*, we were already that connected.

What's your house like?

It's a simple house... *dalawa lang kami e*. It's enough to call home; that's the most important. There are people who build a house to show off. Not us. We just want a place that we're happy to stay in. *Hindi 'yung* you look around and you want to get out of there.

My wife likes keeping house. I provide, she runs the household. The arrangement works perfectly for us. She asks my opinion occasionally and I give it occasionally. But I'm bad with, for instance, color combinations.

There's one part of the house, though, that she leaves entirely up to me—the music room, where the home entertainment system and all my computers are.

Did you say you need to bring a bodyguard when you go to the movies?

Yes. In the first few days, my wife would cry. "Mike," she would say, *"ano ba 'tong buhay na pinasok mo?"*

So when you say Baby is supportive, that's saying a lot.

Oh yes.

Would you rather not have security?

Yes, but I've learned to accept reality. You must remember, *halimbawa*, for "Imbestigador" alone, we have at least five stories per episode. That's two or three people added to the list of those who want to harm you. *Nasasagasaan e. Kung nagde-demanda lang*, we have lawyers to handle them. *E, may ibang klase kung magalit. Tapos ngayon, me* "Imbestigador" *na sa radyo* daily.

But even as you say that, your face is glowing.

Oo naman, this is my passion, especially radio. You know, *sa* GMA we wear this pin that says "Number 1." I'm the only one who wears this other pin that says, "I love radio." I got it from a radio conference in the US. I'm thinking of having it copied because many people have been asking me for it. If I had to choose between radio and TV, that's an easy decision... instant ... I will stick with radio. Five days a week, I wake up at 4:30 a.m. to get to my radio show at 6. No matter how early you sleep the night before, waking up that early is something your body will never get used to. Tell me, what can make somebody do that, if not passion? Of course I get two wake up calls from the station apart from my own alarm clock.

Has your wardrobe changed drastically?

Oh, yes. Originally, for "Saksi," they wanted me to be in working clothes—necktie loose, sleeves rolled up. Now it's suits, dark colors, except when I go remote. I'm not really much of a dresser. I have this thing about ties; I have more than a hundred. But a big portion of my wardrobe is still jeans and polo shirts. I thank God for that.

Those assignments in flooded areas, and that famous coverage in Baghdad, did you choose those?

Assignments. Occasionally, I request. *'Yung* coverage *sa* Vatican (Pope John Paul II's death), I asked for that long before his condition became critical.

Did Baby go with you?

Pag trabaho, she backs off... that's another mark of her supportive-ness.

Are you planning to retire early? No—are you thinking of ever retiring?

When I was 30, I told myself I would retire at 35. *E*, now I'm enjoying it.

(Mike is GMA Network Inc.'s senior vice president for Radio. He is also the president of RGMA Network Inc., a GMA affiliate that manages the network's provincial radio operations.)

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December 19

Sunday BIZ
E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph
Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Finance's loss is sales and marketing's gain

LORENZO Llamzon sold Nike shoes in college to earn extra. Today, at 37, he sits as president of express and logistics firm DHL Philippines.

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ONE OF THE ADVANTAGES OF being the 7th of eight children is that it brings out the competitive spirit.

For Lorenzo Llamzon, this spirit enabled him to quickly jump from one higher position to another, ending with the presidency of DHL Philippines, the local subsidiary of express and logistics giant DHL, at 37.

Llamzon tells Sunday Biz that he had no choice but become competitive because he had to hold his own against his bigger, older and more experienced brothers and sisters—whether it was in getting his fill at the dinner table, playing basketball or in posting excellent academic marks.

As a result, he has always been driven to succeed, putting in his energy, resources and time behind everything he ever did to come out on top.

"I am a competitor and I always enjoy a challenge," Llamzon says.

One of his first major challenges came during his college days at the De La Salle University when he decided to sell Nike products, distributed by Mondragon Philippines at that time, to add to the allowance his parents gave him.

While he was able to sell, Llamzon did not keep it up for long as his heart wasn't really in it.

It was not the case when he took DLSU up on the offer to teach right after graduating in 1988 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Economics.

"I was very flattered when I got the offer because I was just 19," Llamzon says, "I really enjoyed it."

He taught a number of Economics subjects to freshmen as well as senior students, and he got P14 an hour.

While he enjoyed teaching, there were other things he wanted to do.

He thought going into finance was one of them, thus, he joined Citibank NA as a foreign exchange analyst of the corporate investment banking group.

That did not last long, either.

"I just did not like the work," Llamzon says, "As a teacher, you feel that you contribute to the students. I did not get the same fulfillment or satisfaction from the next job."

"Very early in my career, I learned that finance was not for me," Llamzon adds.

The finance world's loss was sales and marketing's gain.

He moved from Citibank to IBM Philippines in 1989 and it was here where Llamzon says he earned his stripes in sales marketing.

Llamzon was largely responsible for developing and taking care of IBM's business in the government sector.

Along the way, his competitive edge was further sharpened as he had to fight it out with other companies eyeing the same government accounts.

FIRST JOB

That meant doing a lot of homework before making a sales pitch, and in enhancing his capability of dealing with all kinds of people.

His teaching experience and growing up in a big household came in handy, as he already knew a lot about compromise, in understanding where the other person is coming from, and in sharing expertise.

Llamzon truly enjoyed his stint at IBM and probably would have stayed on if the chance to work abroad did not come up in 1995, when he was offered a market analyst post in Hong Kong.

He was reluctant because it meant leaving his family behind.

But because he was single and the opportunity to make it outside the Philippines was too good to pass up, he went to Hong Kong and joined market research firm IDC.

He took to Hong Kong and his new job like fish to water.

"I would say that Hong Kong was where I found myself. I grew up there," Llamzon says.

He stayed for eight years in IDC Asia/Pacific, and he moved up the ranks from market analyst to research manager, to director of sales in Asia Pacific and eventually associate vice president of sales handling the entire Asia/Pacific operation.

Llamzon loved it in Hong Kong because it was a vibrant city and there was great equality among the people. It was also there where he learned to adapt to different cultures and situations.

He enjoyed his stint in Hong Kong so much that it took IDC higher management six months to drag him from Hong Kong to Singapore, where a higher position was waiting for him.

It was a good thing that he did, as it was during a rare vacation from Singapore to Bali in Indonesia in 1999 when he met his wife, with whom he now has two sons.

Llamzon says it was a fateful meeting and since she was American, the relationship meant astronomical overseas phone bills and frequent travels to the United States.

The long distance relationship worked out anyway with his wife eventually moving to Singapore and landing a good job.

They were happy building a family and separate careers together, such that going back to the Philippines was not really among the immediate priorities.

It was, thus, fate when Llamzon got the offer last year to head the operations of DHL in the country of his birth.

His first reaction was surprise when he was approached with the offer by a headhunter.

"I asked him why he was even talking to me when I have no experience in logistics," Llamzon says, "And besides, I loved my job in IDC."

He passed up on the offer when it first came to him. When it came up again a few months later, that old competitive spirit kicked in.

"I was convinced by the headhunter who became my friend that I could do a good job in DHL.

FINANCE'S/ B3

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Altis 1.6 E A/T	800,000	100,000	59,539	41,000	32,088	23,326	18,822	16,244
Altis 1.6 E M/T	765,000	100,000	56,388	38,831	30,962	22,094	17,828	15,385
Altis 1.6 J M/T	708,000	100,000	51,257	35,297	28,150	20,088	16,209	13,985

MODEL	SRP	DOWNPAYMENT	12	18	24	36	48	60
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Innova 2.5 G M/T	980,000	100,000	76,188	52,466	41,807	29,834	24,073	20,787
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Innova 2.0 G M/T	930,000	100,000	71,087	49,366	39,341	28,074	22,653	19,559
Innova 2.5 E M/T	885,000	100,000	67,636	46,576	37,121	26,489	21,374	18,454
Innova 2.5 J M/T	798,000	100,000	59,804	41,183	32,829	23,427	18,903	16,317
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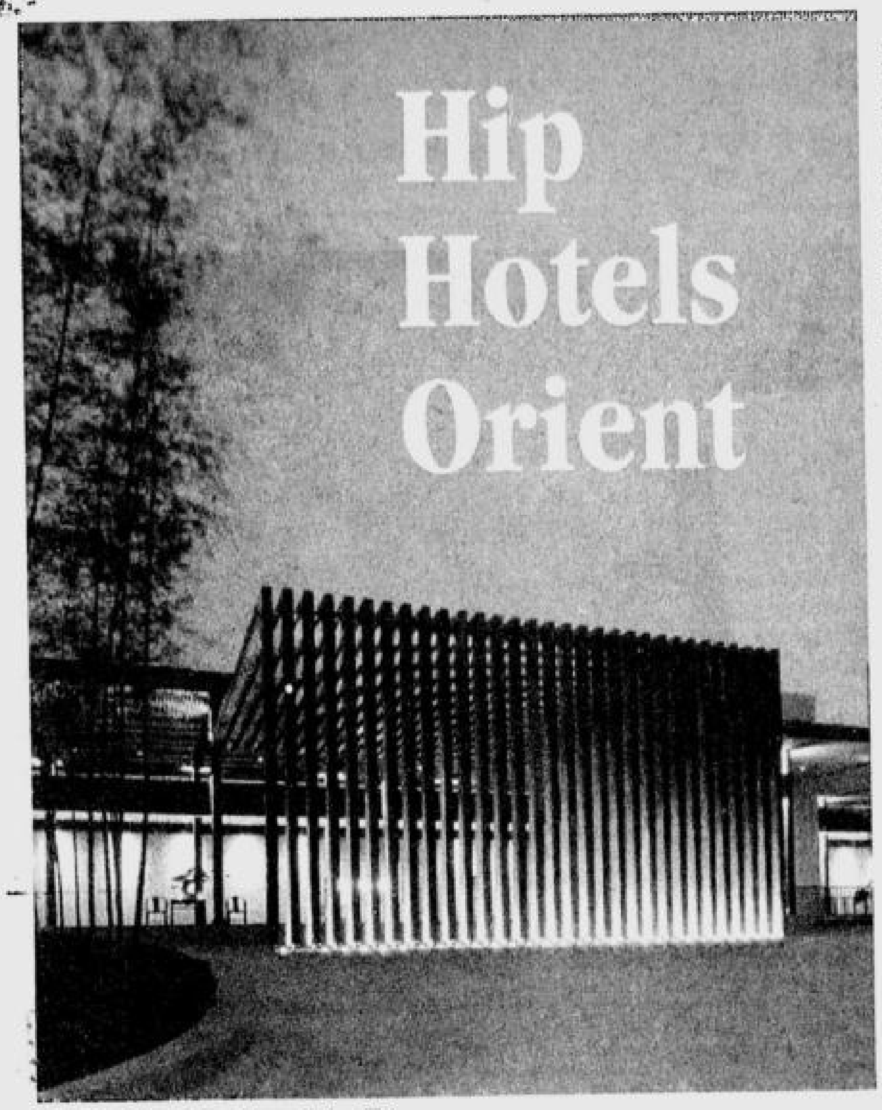


Hip Hotels Orient

THE LALU at Sun Moon Lake, Taiwan

By Sandra Garcia
Contributor

SANTA CLAUS JUST GAVE ME A cool Christmas present—Hip Hotels Orient, the newest addition to Herbert Ypma's Hip Hotel series.

Hip Hotels Orient was going to press when the tsunamis hit Southeast Asia with devastating effect the day after Christmas in 2004. To quote the book's introduction, "Yet, amazingly, and due to nothing than pure luck, it's incredible how little the hotels featured here were affected. Perhaps it's a timely reminder of the vast options Asia has to offer—a plethora of escape destinations that combine world-renowned service with extraordinary locations. Yes, the region has been shaken, but not to the extent that it can dim the enduring attraction of the Orient".

Our hotel picks (in no particular order):

The Lalu at Sun Moon Lake, Taiwan

I personally saw this extraordinary hotel in an extraordinary wonder of a location during my recent trip to Kaoshiung. Designed by Kerry Hill a top Singapore-based architect, the Lalu, which was conceived as an all-suite hotel, has 98 rooms, nine villas, three restaurants and two bars and teahouse—all providing a spectacular view of Sun Moon Lake. To create the view, Hill designed a single long box running parallel to the edge of the lake. The hotel's Olympic-sized pool is positioned between the lake and the hotel. Breath-taking!

BUSINESS TRAVEL

Sun Moon Lake, which covers an area of almost 2,000 acres and stretching to over twenty miles in perimeter, is Taiwan's largest freshwater lake. Its northern half is shaped like the sun and the southern part is in the shape of a crescent moon—thus the name Sun Moon Lake.

The Lalu stands on the site of the former summer residence of former President Chiang Kai-Shek, who was a frequent visitor of Sun Moon Lake.

Room rates from NT$13,800

Losari Coffee Plantation, Central Java Indonesia

Nestled among the volcanoes in the island's central highlands, Losari Coffee Plantation is a coffee plantation-turned-hotel. The history of Losari dates back in 1922 when Van Der Swan, a Dutchman, took a lease on the land in the high mountains of Java, once synonymous with coffee, which he called Karangredjo. He built a Dutch colonial house on the property which was eventually bought by an Indonesian Army Colonel and then by Italian Gabriella Teggia in 1965. Teggia renamed the plantation to Losari after the nearby village.

There are now private villas around the estate where the guests stay, the old plantation house is now the library and living room and the bar in one of the old warehouses. The other facilities include two restaurants, an octagonal swimming pool and a spa.

Today, Losari Coffee Plantation produces an estimated twenty tons of coffee beans a year and its roster of clients include Illy and Lavazza.

Room rates from US$250.00

Aman-i-Khas, Ranthanmbhore, Rajasthan, India

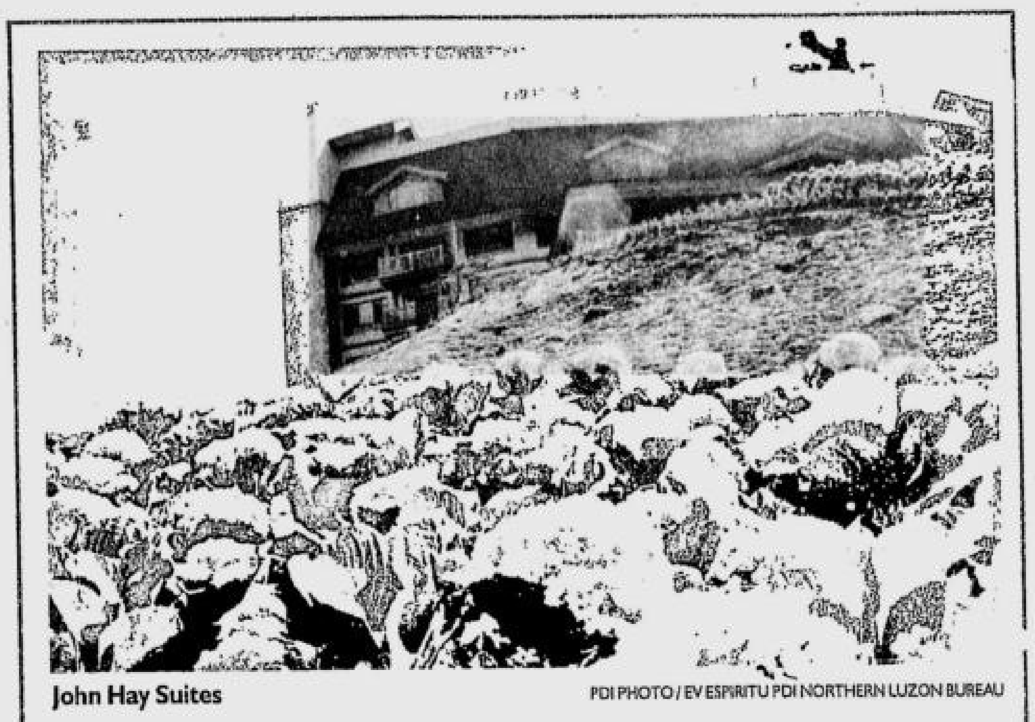
It's camping in typical Aman fashion, luxury and comfort at Aman-i-Khas located in Ranthanmbhore, three hours by land from Jaipur. Ranthanmbore is one of India's best know tiger reserves, giving guests at the Aman-i-Khas the opportunity to witness tigers on their own turf.

The air-conditioned guestrooms, er, guest tents are veritable canvas palaces, just like the Maharaja of Jodphur's tent. The Majaraja's tent was a palace of cloth. It had a banquet hall, separate chambers for matters of state, a private area for his wives and a grand bedroom. One such tent is presently in the royal fort palace in Jodhpur made of heavy red velvet and finished with stitching in gold thread.

Each guest tent at the Aman-i-Khas has a netted interior veranda, a separate entrance hall and a separate central lounge. There is also a changing area with intricately-crafted teak cabinets complete with his and her sinks, a separate bathroom with shower stall and sunken bath and toilet.

The stateroom or bedroom is complete with two desks and a trunk at the base of the bed which serves as "cover" for a mini-fridge.

Room rates from US$2,250 for three nights



John Hay Suites PDI PHOTO / EV ESPIRITU PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Camp John Hay Hotels prepares to run John Hay

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—THE DEVELOPERS OF Camp John Hay are about to open their biggest hotel by the end of this month, ending a phase in a development project that was marked by legal problems.

The opening of the 280-room John Hay Suites will pave the way for the Camp John Hay Hotels Inc. (Hotels Inc.) to assume the control over this former American base land from its construction and development arm, the Camp John Hay Development Corp (CJHDevco).

Frederico Alquiros, Hotels Inc. chief operating officer, says the Suites allows the firm to operate most of the 267-hectare Camp John Hay special economic zone as a sprawling country club and exclusive village.

The Suites' design matches the woodland architecture of the cabins, the Camp John Hay Manor and even the economic zone's street lights, which blend the rustic nature of the camp's old American cabins and the city's history.

The US Supreme Court acknowledged Ibaloi leader Mateo Cariño in 1909 as the original owner of Camp John Hay lands, which were converted into American military garrisons.

The Suites is also the home of a reconstructed 19th Tee Restaurant, a landmark that Camp John Hay's old American caretakers used to operate for its golf course until the developers tore the original structure down.

Alquiros says the consortium has gradually collapsed many of its operations, allowing Hotels Inc. today to manage the 189-room Manor, P8 million log homes, 22 country homes and 24 forest cabins.

The developers expect to build about 150 country homes and forest cabins, and 16 log homes in the course of its lease.

But this is one country club that will be accessible to the "tsinelas" (slipper-wearing) crowd in the next five years, Alquiros says.

CJHDevco inherited the hostility that has been given previous attempts to develop Camp John Hay, since the US relinquished control over this forested property in 1991.

Alquiros, who handled CJHDevco's operations in the firm's early years, says he was aware of how the developers would need to respect the devotion residents had for Camp John Hay.

The next years will see Hotels Inc. develop camping grounds, open up more picnic areas and devote its time to have Camp John Hay residents to interact with Baguio folk.

THE SUITES' design uses woodland architecture.

Alquiros began efforts this week to have all long-term leaseholders of John Hay's log homes and hotel rooms meet each other in informal parties.

He says the meetings, in effect, will help form John Hay's version of a homeowners' association, which will interact officially with the public.

He says the interaction is inevitable. Locals and tourists flock to the economic zone to have their photographs taken in front of the occupied country homes.

He says many such homes would soon be leased by celebrities, increasing the odds that the zone might end up becoming a tourist attraction.

Baguio residents make Camp John Hay their weekend destination, noting that picnic grounds are often full on Saturdays and Sundays, Alquiros says.

He says the Suites is the second of a four-hotel network in a medium-term development plan that Fil Estate and CJHDevco chair Robert John Sobrepeña set out to complete to introduce about 1,000 hotel rooms to Baguio's tourism industry.

"The [medium-term development plan proposed] four hotels ... There was really [a plan] to complete 1,000 rooms because that was what Baguio would have needed," he says.

The third hotel, which would have been a convention hotel, would have been the largest with 400 rooms that would service the clients of the CAP John Hay Convention Center, Alquiros says.

"The Suites ... completes 440 and 450 between the Manor and the new hotel for that level of clientele ... We will see when it will be necessary but in the meantime the two hotels will augment the city's convention requirement," he says.

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ROADSHOW SCHEDULES:

December 14
Makati City - DBP Social Hall, 10:00 am

December 15
Cagayan de Oro - Grand City Hotel, 2:00 pm
Iloilo - Sarabia Hotel, 2:00 pm
San Fernando, Pampanga - Red Rickshaw Restaurant, 2:00 pm

December 16
Cebu - Waterfront Hotel, 2:00 pm
Baguio City - Hotel Elizabeth, 2:00 pm

December 19
Davao City - Marco Polo Hotel, 10:30 am

P&G donates 70 additional houses to Gawad Kalinga

IN A SYMBOLIC END TO A YEAR-LONG celebration of its 70th anniversary in the country, Procter & Gamble (P&G) Philippines, in a joint undertaking with Gawad Kalinga (GK), is presently building 70 houses more for poor families at the Baseco Compound in Tondo, Manila.

Gawad Kalinga is a multi-sectoral partnership whose vision of eradicating the slum areas in the country, according to P&G Philippines president Johnip Cua, affirms the company's commitment to improve life in its areas of operations as well as help in the development of needy children under its global 'Live, Learn and Thrive' program.

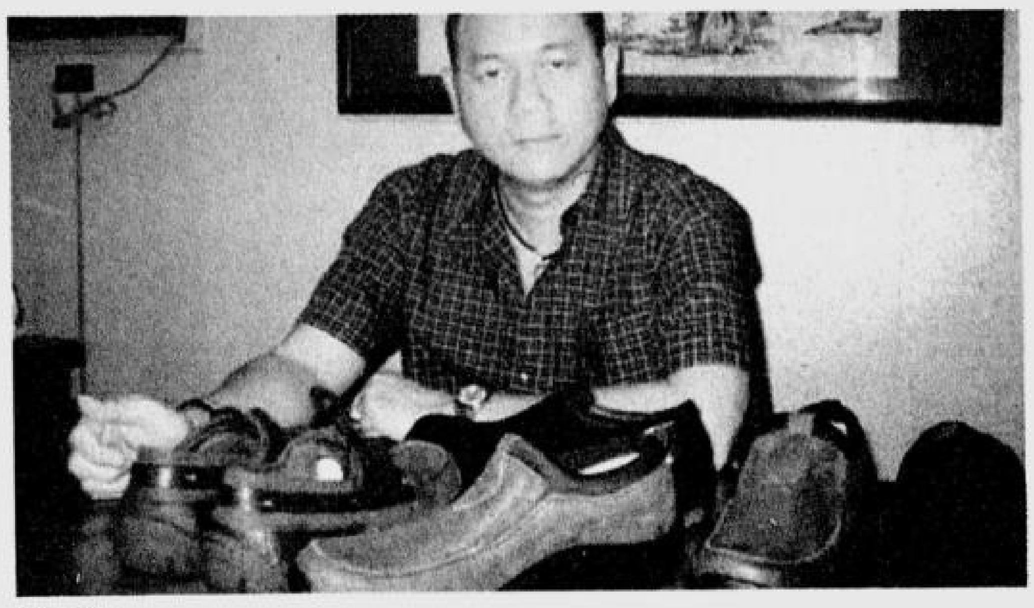
Together with Deb Henretta, president of P&G Asean-Australasia-India (AAI) Market Development Organization, Cua turned over to GK executive director Tony Meloto a P3.5 million check last Wednesday. The amount, Cua said, covers expenses for the ongoing construction of additional clusters of houses, to be called P&G Village Phase 2 also in Baseco, where 48 families are already living in houses also awarded to them by the company last January.

Other company executives present were Filippo Passerini, president & chief information officer of P&G Global Business Services (GBS); Jos Van Pee, vice president of P&G Information and Decisions Support (IDS) & GBS customer and commercial solutions; Greg Clark, director of P&G Manila Service Center; and lawyer Ed Imperial, general counsel and external relations director for AAI.

TONY MELOTO of Gawad Kalinga, P & G Philippines president Johnip Cua and P & G Asean-Australasia-India Market Development Organization Deb Henretta.

Cua said in an interview that the fresh funds for the building of the new houses came from P&G employees from its Makati offices and plant facilities in Cabuyao, Laguna, who each donated an amount equivalent to a full day salary, as well as from company savings earned for foregoing its traditional Christmas party this year.

Over 100 of these employees also showed up last Wednesday to lend a hand in the actual building of the new houses. Wearing gloves, they mixed sand, water and cement, carried the mix bucket by bucket through a human chain to the rising structures, drove nails into slabs of wood, or painted walls even under drizzles in a touching sight that moved the beneficiaries.



CHONG

Making it in market that favors imports

IN A FIELD WHERE INTERNATIONAL brands dominate the rubber and casual shoes market, one brand stands proud and continues to carve a niche long after it was launched 20 years ago.

In a country where the people are 'imported'-conscious, World Balance continues to have a huge following.

"Pinoys are generally drawn to brands," says Armando Chong, director for Whisky Bravo Marketing Corp., the company behind the World Balance shoe line.

"They always associate brands with quality. If you have a brand that is local sounding, chances are, it will have a weak following even if you have good quality products. Still, if you have a foreign-sounding brand but with low quality, Pinoys will not patronize your products," he explains.

"So we came out with a foreign-sounding label with very good quality so people will still come back and buy our products," he added.

This, according to Chong, is the strategic edge of their brand. True enough, World Balance became a big hit among Pinoys. The brand became a huge success that almost every Pinoy knows the brand and patronizes the products.

But how did they arrive at the brand name, which, for more than two decades now, has been a familiar name in Filipino footwear industry?

"I thought of using the word 'world' because it is encompassing, it also connotes the 'world of shoes' where we dominate. I then paired it up with 'balance' to describe our company's eye for quality. After all, shoes, to have a better fit, should be made with the element of balance," narrates Chong.

The first products were basketball shoes. But World Balance became a byword when they introduced their flagship line—the boat shoes (topsiders)—in the 80s.

Aside from the basketball shoes and the boat shoes, World Balance features a variety of footwear to provide Filipino men and women with more options. Equally world-class in quality at affordable tags are the sandals, slippers, hiker shoes, casual shoes, and styles for running and other sport activities.

But the company was not spared by the economic crisis in the early and mid 90s. "We were suffering from low exports and high cost of imported materials. We had to lower our production."

However, the company continued on producing low-cost items like slippers and sandals. "Even if the market was suffering, we had to make sure that the brand is still alive."

And alive, it still is. World Balance continues to be the trusted brand of the practical Pinoys who are looking for reasonably-priced high-quality footwear that they can proudly wear at work and during recreation.

"Consumers are getting wiser. They look for a pair that is both aesthetically appealing and very comfortable to wear. Unfortunately, these are almost always associated with imported brands which are also very expensive. With World Balance, however, you get the same aesthetics and comfort at a cost around 60 percent lower," Chong asserts.

In a world where everything is going global, World Balance is ready to face the challenges head on. "We will continue to develop our line to produce high quality shoes at a much lower price," Chong ends while giving a hint of what the market can look forward to this coming season of celebrations: a new collection of premium Italian-quality leather shoes for men.

Finance's . . .

From page B1

So I thought, why not give it a shot?" he says.

He officially moved to DHL as chief executive on Jan. 1 this year and his first year has been marked by adjustments to living again in the Philippines with a family in tow and working in an industry he knew little about at the start.

Today, his wife and children have adjusted well and are enjoying being so close to Llamzon's family here.

Llamzon, on the other hand, has immersed himself in the logistics and express business and has led the group in together posting a strong growth for the company despite the challenging business environment.

"My challenge now is to continue the strong growth of the business. There are so many opportunities out there," he says.

Opportunity knocks but once.
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How a slice of ham can save malnourished children

FRENZY IS NOW A HEALTHY THREE-YEAR OLD kid, who just six months ago was diagnosed as malnourished, because his weight was not normal for his age. How Frenzy and 115 other poor children in Barangay Paso de Blas in Valenzuela City have recovered from malnutrition is a story worth telling. The sad part is that millions of children in the Philippines remain malnourished.

A survey conducted by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) in 2001 showed that 3.7 million Filipino preschool children, with ages five years and below, were underweight. Children become underweight after suffering from malnutrition for a long period.

Aware of the problem, the Department of Health (DOH) has launched a Food Fortification Program in response to the growing micronutrient malnutrition, which has been prevalent in the past several years. Unfortunately for the Filipino children, the government could only do so much, because of budget restraints.

Children need micronutrients to maintain a strong, healthy and active body and sharp mind. Studies in the past have shown that malnutrition has been the cause of death of 60 percent of children less than 5 years old.

The DOH cited nutrition surveys showing an increase in the prevalence of micronutrient malnutrition, particularly that of Vitamin A Deficiency Disorder (VADD) and Iron Deficiency Anemia (IDA) among children since 1993.

"Based on the results of the 2003 National Nutrition Survey of the FNRI, the prevalence of VADD and IDA among children and women of reproductive age continue to be high, and for children, they're even higher than that of 1998," the department said in a statement.

Amid a fiscal deficit affecting government expenditures, funds to address micronutrient malnutrition in the country could only reach few communities. It is up to the private sector, therefore, to lend a helping hand for the children, who will become the future leaders of this nation.

In May 2005, meat processing firm CDO-Foodsphere Inc and Odyssey Foundation Inc launched Gabay Buhay, a supplemental feeding program that seeks to reduce the number of underweight children in the country.

Established on June 4, 2004, Odyssey Foundation, a non-stock, non-profit organization, serves as the corporate social responsibility arm of CDO-Foodsphere and represents the company in its humanitarian undertakings.

In June 2005, Frenzy and 115 other kids, who were underweight at that time, were enrolled in a 16-week feeding program. On October 15 this year, Valenzuela City Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian personally distributed certificates to the children, declaring that their weights have been restored to healthy levels.

Eleanore Erguiza, a social worker at Odyssey Foundation, said the program has given the poor children, aged three to six years, a chance to experience healthy childhood, which is essential in order for them to become productive citizens of this nation.

In 2006, CDO and Odyssey Foundation seek not only to continue the Gabay Buhay supplemental feeding program but more so to expand its coverage to more than 700 malnourished children.

To finance the feeding program, CDO-Foodsphere has committed to donate P5 from the proceeds of each CDO Holiday Ham that it can sell this coming Christmas season.

"As a socially responsible company, we strongly feel that it is our duty to help the less fortunate members of our society," Jonathan Bendicion, CDO senior marketing manager said.

Bendicion explained that under the CDO Holiday Ham sales advocacy, the company is earmarking P5 from the sale of each kilo of the delicious ham to Gabay Buhay.

He expressed confidence that Filipino consumers will like the idea of buying a delicious ham and help advance a noble cause at the same time.

"We want to let our consumers realize that while they are feasting on our flavorful CDO Holiday Ham, they are also saving poor children from malnutrition," he added.

Odyssey Foundation is hopeful that through the contribution of CDO and the loyalty of its consumers, the Foundation can expand its Gabay Buhay supplemental feeding program to save more malnourished children.

Bendicion said that by simply buying CDO Holiday Ham, Filipino consumers can help respond to the problem of malnutrition in the country.

"A slice of CDO ham can bring better future for the malnourished children," he said.

ANG PAGTATAPOS
MALULUSOG NA

THE FORT STRIP 1ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The Fort Strip celebrated its 1st anniversary celebration, Nov. 25, at the Fort Strip Esplanade, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Shown are: Vic de Vera of Widescope, Wendel Pascua of the Fort Strip, Nikki Gil, Pepito Olarte and Kenny Nuyda of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Michelle and EJ Sabandal of WIMC.

AN ORGANIZATION OF TOP LEADERS IS BORN

The Quezon Club Member's Night Quezon City Mayor Sonny "SB" Belmonte Jr. was conferred the first harmony membership by the recently launched Quezon Club, Quezon City's first and only socio-political, business club. In photo are Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista (Founding Director) Jose Jimenez III (Founding Chairman) John Calub (Executive Director) and the other founding directors of the Quezon Club.

SIA'S FIRST CLASS ON ANC'S 'EXECUTIVE CLASS'

Tune in to ANC's Executive Class program with this week's episode on 'Flying High', on Dec. 18, 6 p.m. with a replay at 11 p.m., and get a firsthand viewing of Singapore Airlines' (SIA) exclusive First Class Service to Singapore with TV host David Celdran. Viewers may purchase the same luxurious trip to Singapore for a very limited period from Dec. 18 this year till Feb. 18 Feb. 2006, specially priced at only USD1559 which includes First Class Roundtrip airfare to Singapore on Singapore Airlines, stay at a Millenia Suite with Club lounge access at the Ritz-Carlton Millenia Singapore and two way limousine airport transfers. For more information, call your travel agent or Singapore Airlines in Manila 7568888/7568899 local 7000-3, in Cebu 2326211, and in Davao 2245608.

Insular Life's 95th anniversary treat for its policyholders

AS INSULAR LIFE'S WAY OF SAYING THANK you to all those who have entrusted to Insular Life their future financial security, they offer these anniversary treats:

Guaranteed Issue Offer

From Nov. 1 to Dec. 16, 2005, Insular Life policyholders may apply for an additional insurance coverage, without the need for a medical examination. To qualify for the offer, a policyholder must:

a. have an in-force policy that was medically-underwritten as standard and issued from Jan. 1, 2003 up to Oct. 31, 2005; a policyholder whose policy was issued with a standard rating on the basis of his agent's Non-Medical Authority will not qualify for this offer.

b. be at least 12 months old but not more than 50 years old as of the effective date of the new policy; and

c. not have undergone any major operation, nor have contracted a serious medical impairment after the last policy was issued.

A qualified policyholder may apply for an additional coverage equal to the face amount of the basic policy issued previously (inclusive of STAR, if any), up to a maximum of P2 million. This is on condition that the additional coverage will not raise the policyholder's over-all coverage with the company (new policy plus existing policies) to more than P50 million. For more information, contact your soliciting agent or call Insular Life's agency relations and services staff at 771-1818 loc. 5104 and look for Iris Aman.

CASHandog ng Insular Life, I-Text Mo, Info Mo

Policyholders of Insular Life with in-force policies can text their latest valid contact information to Insular Life and get the chance to win as much as P95,000 in 2 raffle draws on December 2005 and February 2006. To join, text: INSULARLIFE Policy Number/Last Name/Birth Date/Home Phone. Birth Date is in mmddyy format and Home Phone with area code for non-MM numbers.

Example: INSULARLIFE A009999991/Flores/021859/063-8669910

Send to 2327 for Globe subscribers and 0917-8902327 for non-Globe subscribers.

Raffle Mechanics:

1. An entry will be considered valid only if it follows the prescribed text message format specified above. Each text message sent will cost the sender P1.

2. Only one (1) raffle entry will be considered for one (1) valid policy number. For policy number with multiple messages, only the last valid message sent will be considered.

3. Winners will be determined by electronic raffle draw. Only in-force policies at the time of draw will be declared valid winners.

4. There will be two (2) raffle draws: December 2005 and February 2006. Non-winning raffle entries in the December 2005 draw will be included in the February 2006 draw.

5. If a policyholder wins more than once, he/she gets the prize with the higher value.

Names of winners will be published in major newspapers. Winners will be notified through registered mail. Prizes must be claimed within 60 days from the date of notice. For further inquiries, visit any Insular Life branch nationwide, call IL Call Center at 771-1818 locals 4424/4438 or log on to: www.insularlife.com.ph.

Partnerships Beyond Time

Insular Life will honor its long-time corporate clients who continue to trust Insular Life for their company's and employees' insurance needs. Dubbed as Partnerships Beyond Time, to be held on Feb. 10, 2006 at the Insular Life Corporate Centre, it will be a night of thanksgiving and celebration of the enduring relationship established between Insular Life and its various corporate clients. Among the corporations that will be honored are Procter & Gamble, Mantrade Development Corporation, Colgate-Palmolive, IBM, Lopez Group of Companies, Coca Cola Export, National Power Corp, and Krafts General Foods. For more information call Andrew San Juan at 817-3051 loc 3917.

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
KAGAWARAN NG PANANALAPI
KAWANIHAN NG RENTAS INTERNAS
Office of the Regional Director
Revenue Region No. 03
Tuguegarao City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

In view of the failure of the bidding conducted on December 7, 2005, the Bureau of Internal Revenue through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the:

Name of Project	BROADBAND INTERNET SERVICE
Location	BIR, Revenue Region No. 03, Tuguegarao City (Revenue District Offices included)
Approved Budget	P693,000.00
Contract Duration	January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006

All interested parties may get the bidding requirements/terms from Ms. Cirila R. Alegre, Head, BAC Secretariat, BIR Regional Office, ATI Bldg., Don Domingo, Tuguegarao, City starting December 12, 2005. Submission of the sealed bids will be until December 27, 2005 at 8:30 a.m. The opening and deliberation of the bids will be at 9:00 a.m. on the same day and will be held at the BIR Regional Office.

The criteria to be used by the BIR are the following: a) eligibility check of prospective bidders; b) examination and evaluation of bids; and c) post qualification shall be on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" basis.

The BIR-BAC assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss that they may incur in the preparation of their bid. The BIR also reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any of the required formality therein and accept the bids mostly advantageous to the government.

For particulars, please inquire from the BAC Secretariat at telephone no. 844-3779/844-2883.

Approved:
(Sgd.) THELMA S. MILABAO
OIC-Asst. Regional Director
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – December 11 & 18, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation & Communications
LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING & REGULATORY BOARD

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) invites all qualified agencies to apply for eligibility and to bid for the procurement of security services, consisting of

1. Numbers Needed: 13 Security Guards for Metro Manila
   24 Security Guards for Regional Posting
2. Scope of Work
   a. Areas to be serviced: all buildings, structures, project sites, exhibit site, motor vehicles within the LTFRB compound and its perimeter;
   b. Protect life of LTFRB officials and employees, and other properties in the LTFRB Offices and premises;
   c. To provide One (1) Unit, (24-hours, 7 days per week) Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and sixteen (16) Monitoring Camera System in strategic areas for all LTFRB Offices and Installations. Tapes shall be preserved and stored for 1 month before reuse;
   d. Up-to-date security paraphernalia such as metal wand-detectors (One (1) unit/region and two (2) units at Central Office) bomb/drug-sniffing K9 (optional as needed), adequate crowd control materials (as needed), F/As for all SGs, etc.
3. Other requirements will be provided in the Bid Documents.
4. Approved Budget of the Contract (ABC) is Php 7.0 million.
5. The duration of the Contract is 12 months (01 January to 31 December 2006)

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar type of service within the last 2 years, must be financially capable to bid, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or purchased) available for the implementation of the said service. The lists of minimum equipment required are indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check / Screening, as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids, shall use a non-discretionary "PASS/FAIL" criteria Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference(s), Post-qualification, and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR), and as further stipulated in the Bid's Terms of Reference.

Schedule of activities are as follows.

Activities	Date	Time	Venue
2 Issuance of Bid Documents	08 Dec.- 22 Dec. 2005	12:00 Noon	LTFRB (BAC Secretariat)
3 Pre-Bid Conference	22 Dec. 2005	2:00 PM	LTFRB Conference Hall
4. Last Day-Submission of Bids	04 Jan. 2006	12:00 Noon	LTFRB (BAC Secretariat)
5. Opening of Bids and Eligibility	04 Jan. 2006	2:00 PM	LTFRB Conference Hall

Bid documents can be obtained from the BAC Secretariat by the prospective bidders upon payment of a non refundable amount of Php 20,000.00.

For further inquiries, please contact the LTFRB BAC Secretariat at Telephone Nos.: 426-2501 & 426-2485.

LTFRB reserves the right to reject all bids, to waive any formalities or defects found, or to accept such bids to award to any agency whose bid is most advantageous to the LTFRB, in particular, or to the government in general.

EXEC. DIR. RONALDO M. SALUNGA
LTFRB BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI - Dec. 18, 2005)

DAR BIARSP IX

INVITATION TO ATTEND PRE-BIDDING CONFERENCE

Rehabilitation of Municipal and Provincial Offices

The **Belgian Integrated Agrarian Reform Programme** (BIARSP) is a bilateral development programme between the Governments of the Philippines and Belgium. Its aim is to assist the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to successfully complete the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

BIARSP is currently on its third and final phase of implementation. BIARSP is regarded as one of the most important programmes for agrarian reform. It is highly regarded on account of its integrated approach covering not only agricultural support services but also education, public health and institutional capacity building.

To further strengthen the programme's implementation, BIARSP supports its lead partner agency, the DAR, in upgrading the physical state of its field offices in regions 7 and 9 to provide conducive working environment for its staff and have efficient delivery of service. The rehabilitation of two municipal offices (DAR Sta. Catalina, Negros Oriental and DAR Godod, Zamboanga del Norte with an estimated budget of PhP1,000,000.00 and PhP550,000.00 respectively) and two provincial offices (DAR Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay, and DAR Siquijor, Siquijor with a budget of PhP 2,280,000.00 and PhP 2,471,000.00) are found to be necessary.

The BIARSP-Technical Support and Coordination Office (TSCO) therefore invites eligible contractors who are accredited by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board qualified for retro-fitting buildings between PhP 1,000,000 to 3,000,000 or with corresponding record to express their interest to bid for the rehabilitation of one or more of the said offices. Those interested are invited to a private conference on **January 10, 2006 at 9:00 A.M.** where all information regarding the tender will be provided to them.

Interested parties are requested to submit the following documents: company profile, description/experience of similar assignments, 2005 BIR certification of registration and business permit during the private conference. For further queries you may contact us through any of the following:

E-mail	tsco@biarsptsco.org
Post	BIARSP – TSCO, 2nd Floor Sol Y Mar Bldg. Cor. Rizal Blvd. – San Juan Street Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental
Fax	(035) 422-7736
Tel. #s	(035) 225-5929; 225-5930; 225-8681; and 422-7459
Contact Person	Joost Evers, TA-OD

(PDI–Dec. 14 & 18, 2005)

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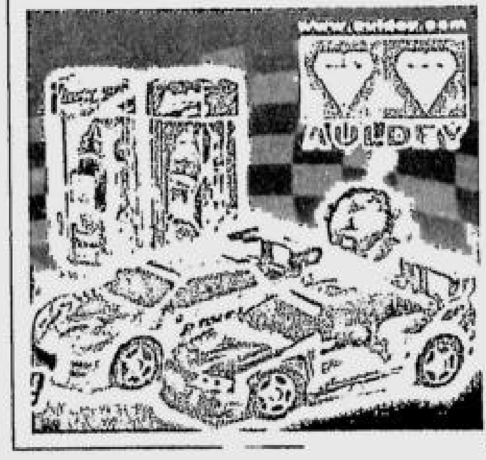

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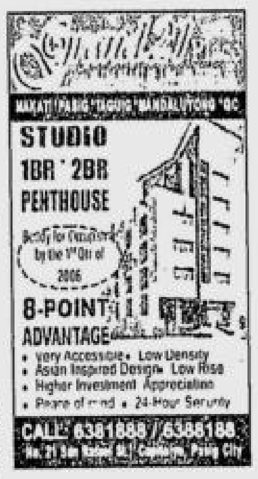
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Barangay Hulo, Mandaluyong City
Area: 24,887 sqm. (more or less)
P397 Million - indicative Selling Price
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UCPB ASSET MANAGEMENT & DISPOSITION DIVISION
Tel Nos.: 811-9797
Price are subject to change without prior notice
UCPB
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CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

Mkt 2Br 1Tb P12.5 tel.prkg studio 9T no dues 897-9417

STUDIO / Coml / 2BR 6.5Tup 1672 Dian St. Mkti 843-9418 0918-9390355 Rose

MANILA

CONDO 2BR Sta. Mesa nr. PUP w/AC 9,500 #0927-8088771

NR LASALLE 3BR 3TB 8992148

PASIG

Bonaventure Studio FF 30m² Prkg 7T 0917-7364200

Emerald Condo 2br Unit 1202 Ortigas Cntr Furnish 633-0164

APARTMENT

MAKATI

3BR 13T CP[illegible]363199

MANILA

2BR 1B P8T 0921-2232867 P6T

3BR 2TB ERMITA 7229341

Legarda LRT CEU 7245613

MANDALUYONG

APT 3BD 3TOILET& BATH 167 ERMITA MLA BESIDES MCM TEL 5247706

PASAY

STUDIO 1 BEDRM 5211025

PASIG

NR SHAW 3BR 2TB 13T [illegible]4676

UP & DOWN 2BR P5K
36D A. Luna St., Malinao
T-6314602 / 6411725

QUEZON CITY

2BR T.Sora P6T 0915[illegible]7259

3BR 2TB BANAHAW 7229341

8T [illegible] grge Fema Rd Proj6- 9211050

WAREHOUSE/ FACTORY

1800m² New M[illegible]ayan Tollgate Nlex 726-4046

•CABUYAO LAGUNA NEW [illegible] 850-2700m² INSULATED ROOF 4RENT 09186267995

ROOM & BOARD

•FURNISH PASAY [illegible]

Mkt Malo P1.8 - 5.2 [illegible]5331

Near ZAPOTE MAKATI [illegible] for 2 Call [illegible]

Only P2001 [illegible] Sucat, Paranaq[illegible]

P1501 Manila 7836781 Daily, Wkly 09228321888

1BR w/AC NR LaSalle 8992148

PARANAQUE

Eastgen Airport A[illegible] Std 6.5T /mo 2BR 8.5T, [illegible] A/C,Cble /Furn/8544832/4723347

BEDSPACE

MAKATI

Mktl nr Ayala P1T Ldy 8974697

BUSINESS RENTAL

BINONDO AREA
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0917-8907547 JOY

MAKATI nr BUENDIA
38m² & 165m² 8903401 ofc hrs

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

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peugeotsales@lionmotors.com.ph

BMW

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DODGE

'89 Dodge Caravan 280T Neg 8181805

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1998 HONDA CRV 4x4 A/T W/ 55,000Kms. Call Jun or Joel @ Tel. 638-3139

HYUNDAI

00 STAREX 9.5 A/T 1ST OWN MINT 565T 87389113-14

ISUZU

'01 TROOPER 35Km 09178454534

MITSUBISHI

00 Advt 2.5D SPORT 1ST OWN MINT 375T 87389113-14

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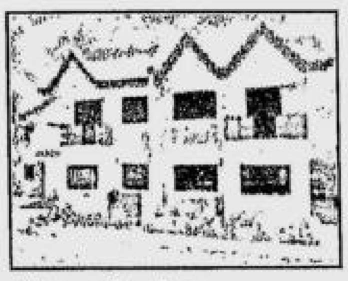
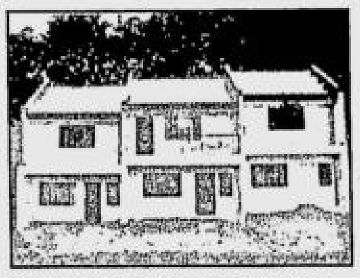

114 sq.m. Floor Area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1% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1% w/out taking car 5315577

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1.5% easy carloan 7815352/55

1.5% w/o taking Car 7228942-43

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Interested applicants may fax their resumé at (043) 756-28-16.

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DECEMBER 17 & 18, 2005
UNDER INT'L JUDGES
MR. KOSEI TAKEDA (JPN)
MR. KENNETH EDH (SWEDEN)
STRICTLY NO ADDENDUM
SHOW SCHEDULE
SUNDAY December 18, 2005
8:00AM – 12:00 PM
Registration & Judging of Non-Sporting & Herding Grp
12:30 PM – 5:00 PM
Registration & Judging of Working Group
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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that extrajudicial settlement of estate of the late MANUEL L. GUATLO with waiver of shares per Doc 192, Page 39, Book III, series of 2005 before notary public Atty. Jess Anthony Q. Yu of Makati City (PDI-Dec. 4, 11, & 18 2005)

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FOR IMMEDIATE EMPLOYMENT!

FERNA CORPORATION (The Food Ingredients Specialist) is currently in need of young, dynamic people to join our team. Below are the required qualifications for the job opening:

CREATIVE & CONCEPT STAFF (GRAPHIC ARTIST)

(CODE: SMD/S)

- Male or Female, not over 35 years old
- College Graduate (preferably with Advertising or Fine Arts Degree)
- With excellent computer skills (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Knowledgeable in freehand drawing and in graphic design software (MAC user preferred)
- Has experience in conceptualization and in execution of graphic design
- Has excellent oral and written communication skills
- With pleasing personality, resourceful, creative, hardworking and trustworthy

FERNA CORPORATION
The Food Ingredients Specialist!
16 Bernardo St., San Rafael Village, MM (near Tondo, Manila)
Interested applicants may call at 2515302-06
or E-mail your resumé at Ferna @skynet.com.ph
You may also fax your resumé with 2x2 photo
and indicated application code at 253-5920.
Look for Beth Carmona

Republic of the Philippines
City of Sipalay
Province of Negros Occidental

Invitation For Bids (IFB)

Date: December 18, 2005
Contract ID No.: SP-073-IN-01 to 03
World Bank Loan No. 4446 PH

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of Local Government Finance and Development and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for the *Construction of School Buildings*. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The *City Government Of Sipalay* invites sealed bids from eligible sources for the *Construction of School Buildings*.

Package A
Bunga-Bunga E/S, Brgy. Canturay; 1-unit, 1-storey, 2CL; 1-unit, Comfort Room; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank. GMNHS Binulig Extn., Brgy. San Jose; 1-unit, 1-storey, 2CL; 1-unit Comfort Room; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank. Gil Montilla E/S. Brgy. Gil Montilla; 1-unit, 1-storey, 4CL; 1-unit Comfort Room; 1-unit,Elevated Water Tank. Canturay E/S. Brgy. Canturay; 1-unit, 1-storey, 6CL; 1-unit Comfort Room; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank. GMNHS Main Campus, Brgy. Gil Montilla; 1-unit, 2-storey, 8CL; 1-unit Elevated Water Tank.

Package B
Tanduay E/S. Brgy. Camindangan; 1-unit, 1-storey, 2CL; 1-unit Comfort Room; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank. Cambogui-ot E/S. Brgy. Camindangan; 1-unit, 1-storey, 2CL; 1-unit Comfort Room; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank. Barasbarasan E/S. Brgy. Manlucahoc; 1-unit, 1-storey, 2CL; 1-unit Comfort Room; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank. GMNHS Camindangan Extn. Brgy. Camindangan; 1-unit, 1-storey, 4CL; 1-unit Comfort Room; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank. Camindangan E/S, Brgy. Camindangan; 1-unit, 2-storey, 8CL; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank.

Package C
Maricalum E/S. Brgy. Maricalum; 1-unit, 1-storey, 2CL; 1-unit Comfort Room; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank. NNHS Cayhagan Extn., Brgy. Cayhagan; 1-unit, 1-storey, 2CL ; 1-unit, Comfort Room. Nabulao E/S. Brgy. Nabulao, 1-unit, 1-storey, 6CL; 1-unit Comfort Room; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank. NNHS Main Campus, Brgy. Nabulao; 2-unit, 2-storey, 8CL; 1-unit, Elevated Water Tank.

3. Bidding documents may be purchased starting *December 19, 2005 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the BAC Office, Sipalay City Hall, Negros Occidental* upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) per package* or its equivalent in a freely-convertible currency, for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of *ninety (90) days* after bid opening and must be accompanied by bid security for the following packages: *Package A – Php 415,000.00, Package B – Php 360,000.00 and Package C- Php 350,000.00* in a form of cash, certified check, bank guarantee or its equivalent in a convertible currency and shall be delivered to the *BAC Secretariat, ABC Building, Brgy. III – Poblacion, Sipalay City, Negros Occidental on or before January 25, 2006 at 10:00 O'clock A.M.* at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.
5. A pre-bid conference will be held on *January 12, 2006 at 10:00 A.M. at the Office of the City Mayor, Sipalay City, Negros Occidental.*

(Sgd.) RENATO P. MANILLA
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Dec. 18, 2005)

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Asian Development Bank-Japan Scholarship Program

Funded by the Government of Japan

Qualified citizens of developing member countries of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), who intend to pursue postgraduate studies in economics, management, science and technology, and other development-related fields are invited to apply for scholarships under the Asian Development Bank-Japan Scholarship Program. Upon successful completion of the graduate program, the scholars are expected to return to their countries and contribute to its socioeconomic development. Scholarships are awarded for graduate studies at designated institutions in courses of study approved by ADB. The Program especially welcomes qualified women applicants who have limited financial means to obtain university education.

The Scholarships

Level of Education: postgraduate (diploma, masters, and doctorate degrees)
Duration: from 1 to 2 years
Coverage: tuition fees, books, subsistence and housing allowance, insurance, economy airfare, and research subsidy

Academic Institutions

- **Australia**—National Centre for Development Studies/ Australian National University, University of Melbourne, University of Sydney
- **China, People's Republic of**—University of Hong Kong
- **India**—Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
- **Japan**—International University of Japan, Nagoya University (Graduate School of International Development), Keio University (International Graduate Programs on Advanced Science and Technology), National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, Ritsumeikan University (Master in Economics), Saitama University (Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering), University of Tokyo (Department of Civil Engineering, School of International Health, Institute of Environmental Studies, and Department of Urban Engineering)
- **New Zealand**—University of Auckland
- **Pakistan**—Lahore University of Management Sciences
- **Philippines**—Asian Institute of Management, International Rice Research Institute/University of the Philippines in Los Baños
- **Singapore**—National University of Singapore
- **Thailand**—Asian Institute of Technology, Thammasat University
- **USA**—East-West Center

Eligibility Requirements

Prospective applicants must:

- be a citizen of an ADB developing member country
- have at least 2 years work experience
- have gained admission to an approved course in a designated institution
- be proficient in oral and written English communication skills to be able to pursue studies
- be in good health
- not more than 35 years old at the time of application. (Staff of ADB and the designated institutions and their close relatives are not eligible to apply.)

Application Requirements

Applicants should obtain application forms from the designated institutions of their choice and submit the completed form and required documentation to the Institution. Applicants should indicate on the application form that they wish to be considered for an Asian Development Bank-Japan Scholarship. (ADB will select the scholars from among those admitted by the institutions. A separate application to ADB is not necessary.) For further information, visit the ADB-JSP website.

www.adb.org/jsp

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Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
A Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

ITB No.: 06-51-2005

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is inviting all interested suppliers in its forthcoming public bidding for the project stated hereunder:

Project : Supply, Delivery & Installation of Axminster Carpets for Casino Filipino – Cebu (Total Area: 1,100 sq.m.) & Casino Filipino – Mactan (Total Area: 535.72 sq.m.)
Brief Description : Machine woven; Construction: Full cut pile; Yarn Description: 80% wool, 20% nylon; Dye Method: Hank Dyeing Cabinet; Carpet Width: 12 ft.,; Binding Materials: Latex, 100% synthetic; Repeat Pattern: 1m x 1m
Approved Budget : Four Million Nine Hundred Seven Thousand One Hundred Sixty Pesos (P4,907,160.00)
Source of Funds : Internally Funded

Only suppliers duly registered with PAGCOR shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Unregistered suppliers must register at the Suppliers Registration & Evaluation Section (SRES), Procurement & Property Department (PPD), 2nd Floor PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila, Tel. No. 526-0573.

The detailed project particulars and instructions to bidders are discussed in the **Bid Documents** available for issuance from **December 8, 2005 to January 5, 2006** at the BAC Secretariat Unit, PPD-Corporate upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Two Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Three Pesos & 58/100 (Php 2,453.58)***. In order to secure the documents, bidders should present the Official Receipt issued by our Cashier to the BAC Secretary handling the project.

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
Pre-Bid Conference	December 14, 2005 (4 pm)
Submission of Bids	January 6, 2006 (2 pm)
Opening of Bids	January 6, 2006 (2 pm onwards)

PAGCOR has the right to disqualify any prospective bidder if found that they have submitted falsified documents and/or information, and the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, to waive any defects or formalities found therein and to accept such bid or a part thereof as may be deemed most advantageous to PAGCOR, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

PAGCOR reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract if there is *prima facie* evidence of collusion between appropriate public officers or employees of the agency, or between the BAC and any of the bidders, or if the collusion is between or among the bidders themselves, or between a bidder and a third party, including any act which restricts, suppresses or nullifies or tends to restrict, suppress or nullify competition, or if the BBAC is found to have failed to follow the prescribed bidding procedures, or for any justifiable and reasonable ground where the award of the contract will not redound to the benefit of the government (R.A. 9184, Sec. 41).

Please address all communications to the BAC Secretariat Unit, Procurement & Property Department.

(Sgd.) **RAFAEL A. FRANCISCO**
Chairperson, BAC 3

(PDI–Dec. 11 & 18, 2005)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is to inform the public that the following persons are no longer connected with **C.F. SHARP CREW MANAGEMENT, INC.**

1. Abigail C. Ancheta Effective 16-Nov-05
2. Kharene R. Mediavillo Effective 20-Nov-05
3. Samuel Arthuro S. Cagaoan Effective 30-Nov-05

All transactions entered into by the persons stated above for and in behalf of the company from the said dates shall no longer be honored.

(For POEA purposes only)

(PDI - Dec. 18, 2005)

For your Classified Ads requirements, call our Classifieds Advertising Hotlines:

HEAD OFFICE:
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899-4425; 897-2535;
897-8425 (Telefax)

CUBAO:
912-9008 to 11 (Aurora)

MAKATI:
892-5578; 811-4361;
811-4370

KALAW:
528-0213; 527-3342

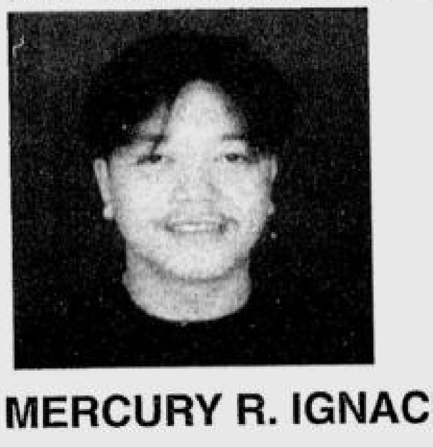
MEGAMALL:
635-0219; 635-0220

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Effective October 17, 2005 **MS. JACQUELINE LEE** whose picture appears above is no longer connected with Ximex Delivery Express. Any transaction entered into by her on behalf of Ximex Delivery Express effective the above date is void and not legally binding on the above mentioned company.

(PDI--Dec. 18, 2005)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



MR. MERCURY R. IGNACIO

This is to inform the public that **MR. MERCURY "MICO" RADAZA IGNACIO.**, whose picture appears above with last known address at 3394 Block 13, Lot 10, NHA Kauswagan, Phase 2, Kauswagan, Cagayan de Oro City is no longer connected with **DIWA DISTRINET INC. CAGAYAN DE ORO**, a distributor of **DIWA LEARNING SYSTEMS INC** publication effective Decemebr 5, 2005.

Henceforth, he no longer has the authority to transact or- conduct business in behalf of the above-mentioned companies.

DIWA MANAGEMENT

(PDI - Dec. 18, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

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00308551-00308575
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00068526-00068550

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P/BGEN RODRIGO S DE GUZMAN GSC (Ret)

PMA CLASS 1965

Peacefully joined our Lord on December 16, 2005 at the age of 64 at the Manila Doctors Hospital.

His loving wife **Teresita**, son **Rommel** (†) and daughter **Rowena**, brother **Bado de Guzman**, sister-in-law **Flora de Guzman**; and niece **Editha Leopando** and **Raul**, other relatives and friends and the members of PMA Class 1965 and their families request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Martin de Porres Parish Church, United Hills Village (formerly UPSI), East Service Rd., Parañaque City.

Interment will be at 12 noon at the Libingan ng mga Bayani on Thursday, December 22, 2005.

The Management and Staff of

Office of the President
BCDA
Bases Conversion and Development Authority

deeply mourn the passing of

Ms. Lily Jeanne Q. Aceña

on the 17th day of December 2005.

Please join us in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in Cosmopolitan Church, Taft Avenue, Manila. Cremation will be on Wednesday, December 21, 2005.

For info please call Cosmopolitan Church c/o Joy at tel. no. 525-4495 or at cell phone no. 0917-8150523.

ERNESTO TUASON MOLINA "ERNIE"

*Peacefully joined his wife **Maria Luisa P. Molina** and Creator on December 14, 2005 at the age of 76.*

His loving family **Ronie**, **Marissa** & **Mel**, **Arlene** & **Erick**, and grandchildren **Osen**, **Yuli** and **Icko**, request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be on Thursday, December 22, 2005 at The Heritage Park, Taguig, after the 1 p.m. Mass at the Santa Ana Church, P. Gil, Manila.

THANK YOU!

To everyone
who offered their prayers,
support, and sympathy...

From the family of the late

COL. (Ret) JOSE ROSARIO AUSTRIA

We, the family of the late

ANTONIO CALLANGAN SANTOS, SR.

Lovingly remember him on his first death anniversary today, December 18, 2005.

His wife, **ANA**; children **Tony** and **Bet**, **James** and **Elvie**, **Cesar** and **Merlie**, **Gertrude** and **Celso**, **Visie** and **Bong** and his grandchildren request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

We, the children of the late

MILAGROS "IMA" PASION CABALU

acknowledge with grateful appreciation your kind expressions of sympathy.

We thank relatives, friends, neighbors, co-teachers, former students and all she had touched with her gentle ways.

Eriberto V. Melliza

November 21, 1940 – December 16, 2005
Passed away in the Grace of our Lord.

He is survived by his wife **Tita**; son **Bhong**; daughters **Honey**, **Malou**, **Candy** & **Van-van**; granddaughters **Kim**, **Nikki**, **Alliah**, **Johanna**, **Patricia** & **Bianca**; grandson **Enzo**; daughter-in-law **Grace**; son-in-law **Jonathan** & **Jessie**; Brothers **Marnie** & **Junior**, sisters **Hennie** & **Girlie**. They & other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remain lies in state at Premier Suite 1, Loyola Memorial Chapels & Crematorium, Guadalupe, Makati.

Cremation will be on December 20, 2005 after the Mass at 9:00 a.m. Interment will follow after, at The Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio.

> **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."** — John 3:16

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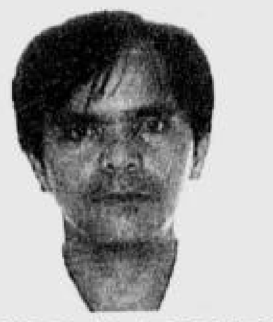

MR. ERLINDO B. RONDINA JR.

This is to inform the public that **MR. ERLINDO BARCELONA RONDINA JR.**, whose picture appears above with last known addresses at Recamadas Apt. Door 5 Purok 1 Banadero Highway, Ozamis City and at Emerald St. Buenavista Village, Patag, Cagayan de Oro City is no longer connected with **DIWA DISTRINET INC. TACLOBAN**, a distributor of **DIWA LEARNING SYSTEMS INC** publication effective October 7, 2005.

Henceforth, he no longer has the authority to transact or conduct business in behalf of the above-mentioned companies.

DIWA MANAGEMENT

(PDI - Dec. 18, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development
Batasan Pambansa Complex Constitution Hills
Quezon City
Telephone No. 931-8101 to 07

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBLITY AND TO BID

ITB No. GOP/05-DSWD-012

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), a national government agency, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), is inviting prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SECURITY SERVICES REQUIREMENT OF DSWD FOR CY 2006.**

The Competitive Bidding procedures, pursuant to the provisions of the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (RA 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA), shall be adopted in this undertaking.

The Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) is **TWENTY TWO MILLION FOUR HUNDRED THIRTY FIVE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED PESOS (Php. 22, 435,200.00)** for the contract duration of twelve (12) months, covering January to December 2006.

Prospective bidders may obtain the complete set of bidding documents from the BAC Secretariat starting December 12, 2005 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00).

A **Pre-bid Conference** is scheduled at **9:00 am** on **December 20, 2005** at the 2nd Flr. Administrative Conference Room, Old Building DSWD Central Office.

Deadline for submission of eligibility requirements and bid proposals shall be at **9:00 am** on **January 3, 2006** at the DSWD Administrative Conference Room. **Late bids will not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders may obtain further information from the **Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat**, 2nd Floor, DSWD Central Office, Constitution Hills, Quezon City with telefax no. 951-7116 or trunkline no. 931-8101 local 217.

DSWD hereby reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s.

(Sgd.) GINA GONZALES
Assistant Director &
BAC Vice Chairperson

(PDI - Dec. 11 & 18, 2005)

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Globe Responds to the Call of the Countryside Through Phone Financing Program

Modern communication has turned the cell phone into a necessity as the need for efficient communication extends to the countryside.

The interest for improved and effective communication goes beyond personal desires as it is a requirement for enhancing business as well as matters related to livelihood. While people in far-flung areas rely on traditional and accessible communication means for information, it was just a matter of time for satellite communication to reach the outskirts and extend the opportunities that advances in communication technology have to offer. Alongside, Globe has increased its network coverage to a total of 5,100 cell sites, covering 96% of the Philippine population as well as expanded its Globe Centers to 90 nationwide.

Phonekit Financing Program
GLOBE TELECOM
RBAP

The Globe-RBAP tie-up offers phone financing scheme to consumers based in rural areas across the Philippines. RBAP Consultant Manny Guina, Globe Sales and Distribution Head Lizanne Uychaco, RBAP President Gen. William Hotchkiss III, Globe Retail Marketing Head Patty Forbes and Senior Specialist for Retail Marketing Moppet Pacheco are some of the hardworking executives behind this groundbreaking project.

Globe Telecom has also made its technology available to a wider community through a partnership with the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines (RBAP). The rural banking system plays a pivotal role in the day-to-day concerns of people in the provinces and rural areas. According to RBAP President Gen. William K. Hotchkiss, there are a growing number of rural banks in the country involved in microfinance that will directly benefit from this deal. "I believe that there will be a great need for phonekits, not only for our microfinancing clients, but for everyone who may want to own a cell phone in the countryside," he said.

Phonekit Financing Program
GLOBE TELECOM
RBAP

Reaching out to touch lives. Globe Telecom and RBAP team up to bring the advantages of technology to the countryside through phone financing program. Globe Sales and Distribution Head Lizanne Uychaco and RBAP President Gen. William Hotchkiss III shake on a strong and steady partnership.

The arrangement between Globe and RBAP include a specialized phone financing plan that makes it possible for rural folks to avail a loan from participating rural banks to purchase prepaid phonekits from Globe.

"The partnership opens unprecedented opportunities to people in outlying regions in addition to the rewards that accompany updated mobile technology," said Lizanne Uychaco, head of Globe Telecom sales and distribution.

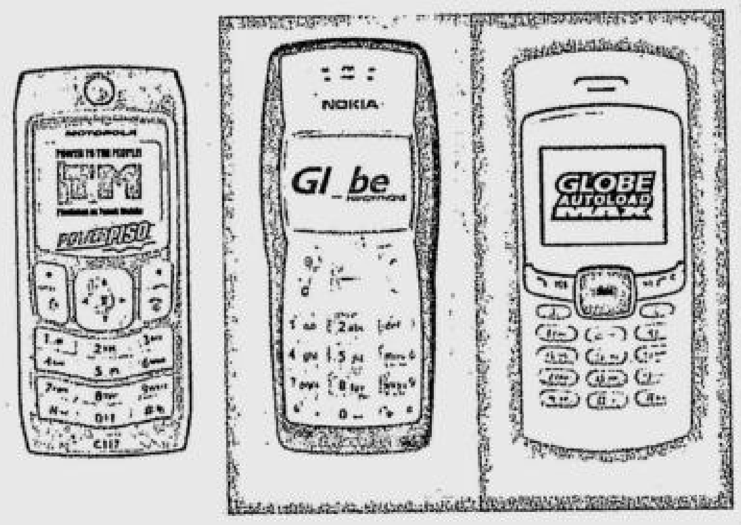
Affordable Pre-paid Phonekits

The three prepaid phonekits from Globe included in the phone financing program are the Touch Mobile Phonekit bundled with a TM prepaid SIM, the Globe Prepaid Phonekit bundled with a Globe Handyphone prepaid SIM, and the AMAX Prepaid Phonekit bundled with an Autoload MAX Retailer SIM.

HULUGAN
kada linggo o kada buwan

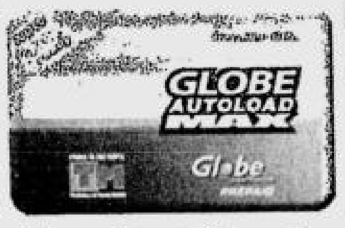
The phonekit loans are payable in 6 months, with flexible amortization schedule that give borrower the option to pay on a weekly or monthly basis. As an additional incentive, Globe has also allotted additional free load credits for every unit they avail as well as upon successfully paying off the loan.

There are currently three phone models available for this program, the Motorola C117, Nokia 1100 and the Sony Ericsson T290i.



AMAX as Income Earner

The available AMAX Prepaid Phonekit allows a subscriber to become a Globe load retailer. The borrowers/retailers are able to automatically reload prepaid credits into other Globe and Touch Mobile subscribers.



An AMAX phonekit retailer earns 14 percent for every load he or she is able to sell. AMAX "wallets" are also available for easy tracking purposes. Users are able differentiate personal calls and text from the retailer's reloading business. The kit was specifically designed with Globe's objective of helping subscribers generate extra earnings while staying connected with friends and family anywhere in the country.

Convenient Payment through G Cash

GLOBE G CASH

Complementing the groundbreaking Phonekit Financing Program is the recently launched RBAP Text-A-Payment Service powered by G Cash, which provides loan payment convenience to Rural Bank borrowers. G Cash, a technology that transforms a typical cell phone into a virtual electronic wallet, allows borrowers to make loan payments quickly and easily using the SMS technology.

The Phonekit Financing Program in synergy with the RBAP Text-A-Payment Service of G Cash directly benefits clients in rural areas by providing utmost convenience to loan borrowers.

In responding to the call of the countryside, Globe demonstrates how communication technology is largely responsible for making the world smaller and bringing the community of mobile phone users closer with one another.

Owning a new cell phone has never been easier.

Visit a participating Rural Bank and fill-out the Phonekit Loan Application Form. The phone financing program is available with our growing partner Rural Banks nationwide.

LIST OF PARTICIPATING BANKS

BATAAN
- **Rural Bank of Abucay**
  - Bagong Daan, Abucay, Bataan
  - Orion Bataan
- **Rural Bank of Bagac**
  - Balanga City, Bataan
  - Bagac, Bataan

BULACAN
- **Second Rural bank of Valenzuela, Inc.**
  - Poblacion Valenzuela City
- **Rural Bank of San Pascual**
  - Arkong Bato, Valenzuela City
  - Obando, Bulacan
  - Pandi Bulacan
  - Taliptip, Bulacan, Bulacan
- **Silahis Bank**
  - Balagtas Bulacan
- **Agricom Rural Bank**
  - Poblacion, Sta. Maria, Bulacan
- **Rural Bank of San Rafael**
  - San Rafael, Bulacan
  - San Ildefonso, Bulacan
  - Baliwag, Bulacan
- **Fil-Agro Rural Bank**
  - Marilao, Bulacan
  - Kalumpit, Bulacan
- **Rural Bank of Baliwag**
  - Baliwag, Bulacan
- **Gateway Rural Bank**
  - Balagtas Bulacan
  - Pandi, Bulacan
  - Bustos, Bulacan

PANGASINAN
- **Rural Bank of Calasiao**
  - Calasiao, Pangasinan
- **Rural Bank of Sta. Barbara**
  - Poblacion Sur, Sta. Barbara
  - Calasiao
  - Mangaldan
  - Sta Maria
  - Tayug
  - Urdaneta
  - Asingan
  - MicroFinancing Dept 3
- **Rural Bank of Central Pangasinan**
  - San Miguel Calasiao, Pangasinan
  - Mangaldan, Pangasinan
  - Manaoag, Pangasinan
  - San Carlos City, Pangasinan
  - Mangatarem Pangasinan
  - Malasiqui, Pangasinan
  - Bayambang, Pangasinan
- **Gulf bank Inc. (Rural Bank of Lingayen)**
  - Lingayen, Pangasinan
  - Dagupan City

TARLAC
- **First Provincial Bank**
  - Mac Arthur Hiway, Tarlac City
  - Brgy Mabini, Tarlac City
  - Paniqui, Tarlac
  - La Trinidad Benguet

BATANGAS
- **Lipa Bank**
  - T.M Kalaw St., Lipa City, Batangas
  - Mabini St., Lipa City, Batangas
  - Taysan Rosario Batangas
  - Tiaong, Quezon
  - Poblacion, Ibaan Batangas
  - Mataas na Kahoy, Batangas
  - San Juan Batangas
  - Balayan, Batangas
  - Rosario Batangas
- **Sunrise Rural Bank**
  - Rosario Batangas
- **Bangko Kabayan**
  - Ibaan Batangas
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  - Poblacion, Mabini Batangas
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  - Rosario, Batangas
  - Calaca, Batangas
- **Excel Rural Bank**
  - Lipa City, Batangas

LAGUNA
- **Rural Bank of Bay**
  - Bay, Laguna
  - Crossing Calamba
  - Calamba City
  - Victoria Laguna

ORIENTAL MINDORO
- **Rural Bank of Victoria**
  - Victoria, Oriental Mindoro

CAMARINES
- **Municipal Rural Bank of Libmanan Inc.**
  - Libmanan Camarines Sur

CAVITE
- **Rural Bank of Naic, Inc**
  - Naic, Cavite
- **Rural Bank of Kawit**
  - Binayakan, Kawit Cavite
  - Poblacion, Kawit Cavite
- **Rural Bank of Maragondon**
  - Maragondon Cavite
- **Rural Bank of Indang Inc**
  - Indang Cavite
- **Rural bank of Mendez**
  - Mendez, Cavite
- **Rural Bank Gen. Trias**
  - Gen. Trias Cavite
- **Rural Bank of Salinas**
  - Rosario Cavite
- **Rural Bank of Silang**
  - Silang Cavite
- **Rural Bank of Carmona**
  - Carmona, Cavite
- **Sto. NiEo Rural Bank**
  - Ternate, Cavite
- **Community Bank (Rural Bank of Alfonso)**
  - Mabini St., Alfonso, Cavite
  - Luksuhin St., Alfonso, Cavite
  - Biñan, Laguna

RIZAL and Metro Manila
- **Rural Bank of Cardona**
  - Cardona Rizal
  - Taytay Rizal
  - Cainta Rizal
  - Antipolo Rizal
- **Eastern Rizal (Jalajala) Rural Bank Inc.**
  - Cainta Rizal
  - Parang Marikina
- **Builders Bank Inc.**
  - Sto Niño, Marikina City
  - Santolan Pasig Metro Manila
  - San Mateo Rizal
  - Manggahan Rodriguez, Rizal
  - Vigan Ilocos Sur
  - Basco, Batanes
  - Pateros, Metro Manila
- **Marikina Valley Rural Bank**
  - Sto Niño, Marikina City
  - Taytay Rizal
  - Antipolo Rizal
  - Pililia Rizal
  - Concepcion, Marikina City
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  - Lower Bicutan, Taguig, Metro Manila
  - Congressional Rd., GMA Cavite
  - San Miguel Pasig City
  - Pulang Lupa, Las Piñas City
- **Filipino Savers Bank, Inc**
  - Tandang Sora Avenue, Quezon City
  - Tangos, Navotas
  - Kapasigan, Pasig City

CEBU
- **Rural Bank of Bogo**
  - Bogo, Cebu
  - Daan Bantayan, Cebu
  - San Remigio, Cebu

SOUTH COTOBATO
- **KORBANK (Rural Bank of Koronadal)**
  - Alunan Ave., Koronadal City
  - Public Market, Sto Niño
  - Digos City
  - Ponce St., Davao City

DAVAO
- **Rural Bank of Tagum**
  - Tagum City
  - Tagum Wet Market
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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2005
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Sunday LIFESTYLE
C1

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Weddings /E
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LOUIS Vuitton insiders Serge Brunschwig, Yves Carcelle, Marc Jacobs and François Delage with Korean superstar Lee Young Ae and supermodel Giselle Bundchen on the store's opening day

Modesty marks the man

Text and photos by Alex Y. Vergara

FASHION DESIGNERS AND so-called fashion icons, especially those who grit their teeth and froth in the mouth at the slightest hint of criticism, can learn a great deal about humility and unpretentiousness from Marc Jacobs, the 42-year-old artistic director of Louis Vuitton.

The American in Paris recently flew to Hong Kong to grace the opening of the newly refurbished and expanded LV outlet at the posh Landmark mall *(see related story)*. LV's *maison* in Central is one of six outlets the luxury brand owns and operates in the former Crown Colony.

Dressed in a crisp white shirt, black pullover, black pants and white sneakers with matching white sports socks, Jacobs, while occasionally taking a drag on his Marlboro Lights, answered all sorts of questions—from where he gets his ideas to his views on the raging "handbag fever"—thrown at him by fashion journalists from all over the region.

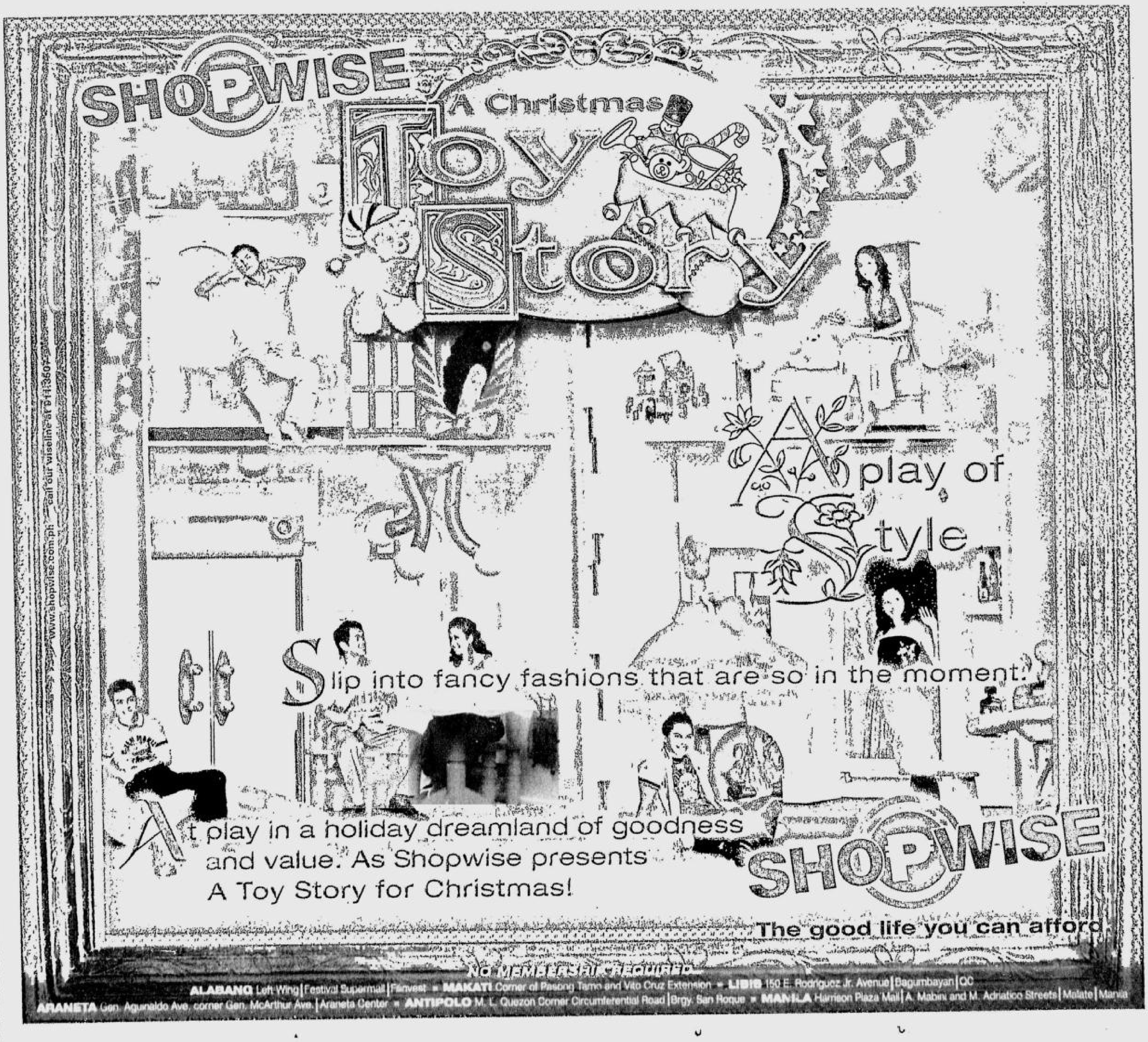
Jacobs, who immediately went on a charm offensive, also touched on the perennial problem of counterfeiting. Oddly enough, he expressed joy at being copied. Since not a few journalists considered him a walking contradiction, he also found himself explaining the difference between luxury and necessity.

As far as inspirations go, mining current events definitely ranks low in Jacobs' list. The witty and self-effacing designer holds no such illusions that fashion is a mirror of society's current state. Lighten up, okay?

Nor does he believe that a woman is moti-

MODESTY/C2

JACOBS, Louis Vuitton artistic director, and Bundchen, LV's newest image model, at the Landmark party



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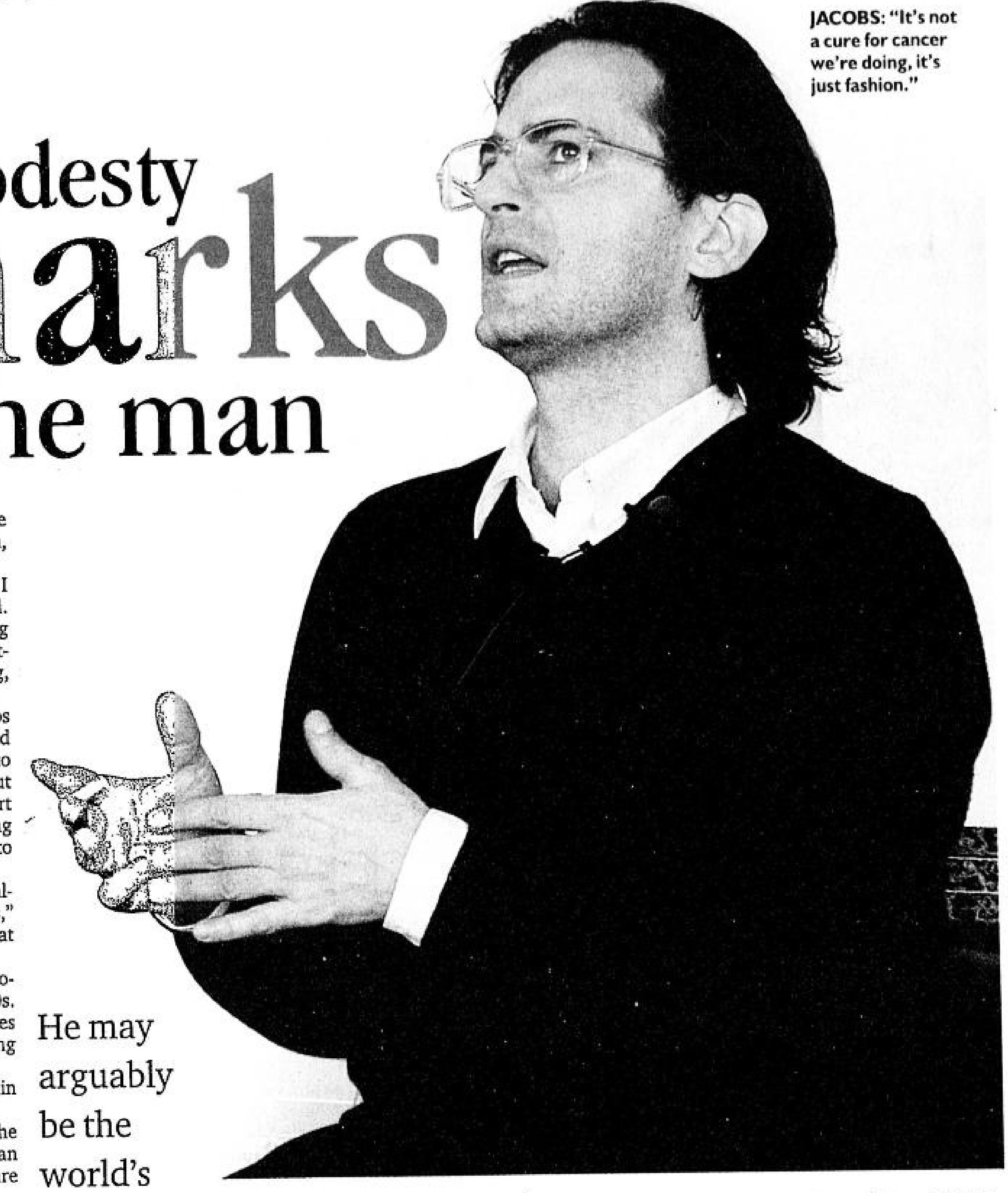
CARCELLE (center) and architect Peter Marino with models in LV dresses

Modesty marks the man

He may arguably be the world's most successful fashion designer, but Marc Jacobs takes everything in stride



JACOBS: "It's not a cure for cancer we're doing, it's just fashion."

From page C1

vated to buy an expensive dress because it reflects her current views or has obvious references to a bygone era. She acquires a designer frock, even if it stays forever in her closet with the price tag still on, out of sheer pleasure of owning one.

"Fashion is like a whim," he said. "The woman who's into fashion doesn't necessarily go through her closet in the morning and picks a dress thinking of representing her views through it."

But don't get him wrong. Jacobs and his team take their work seriously. He allows himself, however, some room to savor his Parisian surroundings, especially when doing a collection for the more iconic LV line.

LV mystique

Since he joined the company in 1998, he has always made it a point to go back and ponder why the LV luggage has become so successful. He does this, he said, before working on a new collection.

"It's not like the most practical and lightweight luggage in the world," he said. "If anything, it's very identifiable. Almost everybody knows that it costs a certain price and brings with it a certain cachet."

His creations may not necessarily scream LV, but they carry with it a particular gloss or polish designed to instantly bring pride to their wearer. In contrast, he considers pieces under his own label, Marc Jacobs, more personal since they're inspired by stuff his close friends are likely to wear. They're also stylish, of course, but much more sedate than LV.

ARCHITECT Jun Aoki

"Since it's not my name on the door at LV, I find myself role-playing in a way," he said. "We take it seriously in terms of creating things, but we also like to let go and have a little fun. It's not a cure for cancer we're doing, it's just fashion."

Such nonchalance also extends to Jacobs no-frills approach as far as his wardrobe and grooming go. His main objective, he said, is to carry on with his work and not worry about his looks. Although he wants to look as smart and as chic as the next designer, he can't bring himself to spend the extra time and effort to look like one.

"Designers like Karl Lagerfeld, [John] Galliano and Tom Ford have such strong looks," he said. "I can't do that. I can't wake up that early and do all those stuff."

As a designer, he also debunked certain notions that he's partial to the 1950s and 1960s. He loves to draw ideas from various decades in the past, but living in the past is something that he doesn't relish.

Whether or not he's inspired by a certain decade is no longer important, said Jacobs.

What matters most to people is what the designer has to offer now. When a woman looks at a dress, she doesn't analyze or figure out what decade it was inspired by.

"All a woman usually cares about is, 'will it [dress] look good on me, will my boyfriend find me attractive in it,'" he said. "How it [dress] comes to be doesn't really matter."

What fashionistas do want, he said, are surprises. People get intrigued and titillated by the unexpected. They're usually disappointed when they get what they expect.

Needless luxury

Most people gasped and elicited surprise when Jacobs remarked that luxury, be it a bag or a little black dress, is something we don't really need.

But, Jacobs added, due to the high standards of workmanship and quality of materials that go into each luxury item, it acquires value and a sense of exclusivity that one covets and aspires for.

That's why he shares LV's passion in its drive to curb counterfeiting. In fact, Jacobs puts fake luxury goods in the same league as bogus money. Zero tolerance! When it comes to his clothes, however, the designer is more open to lesser-known colleagues and RTW brands drawing inspiration from his work.

"To a creative person, that's the highest form of flattery," he said.

As for the so-called handbag fever, Jacobs brought the house down when he said "it sounds a lot better than the bird flu." Such witty and unexpected one-liners—and he had a lot—endeared him more to his audience.

But upon realizing how the remark would sound callous in a region that has been bracing itself for months for the avian flu pandemic, he quickly apologized, before regaling journalists with yet another story he "had read somewhere."

"Clothes usually look good on tall models with amazing bodies," he said. "In real life, it's quite difficult for some women with different shapes and sizes to fit into these clothes. But everybody can carry a handbag. You may not have Giselle's [Bundchen] body, but you could have her hands."

When it comes to necessities, the man didn't even consider his pack of Marlboro Lights and can of Diet Coke as necessary. To him, they're more of "choices." What he values goes far deeper than the material luxuries he's perpetually surrounded with.

"I like to have them (cigarettes and diet soda), but I can live on bread and water. We all could," he said. "The kindness and friendship of my friends and the love of my dogs, those are the things that I really need."

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

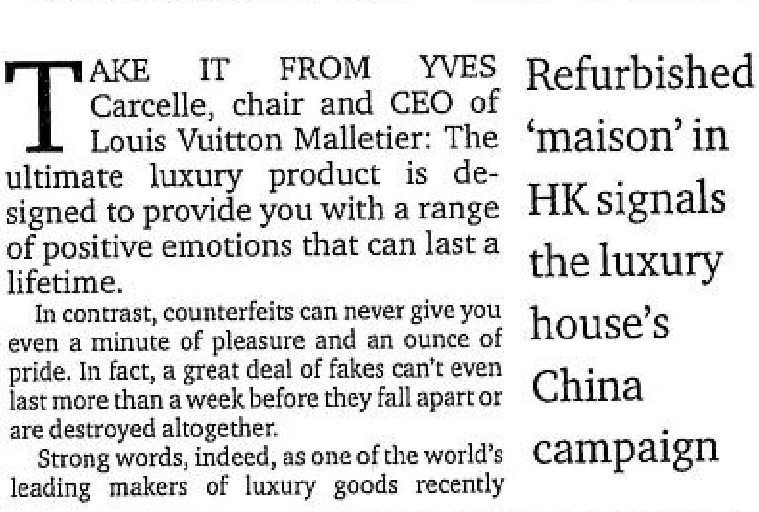
'Beacon' of luxury in Asia

Refurbished 'maison' in HK signals the luxury house's China campaign

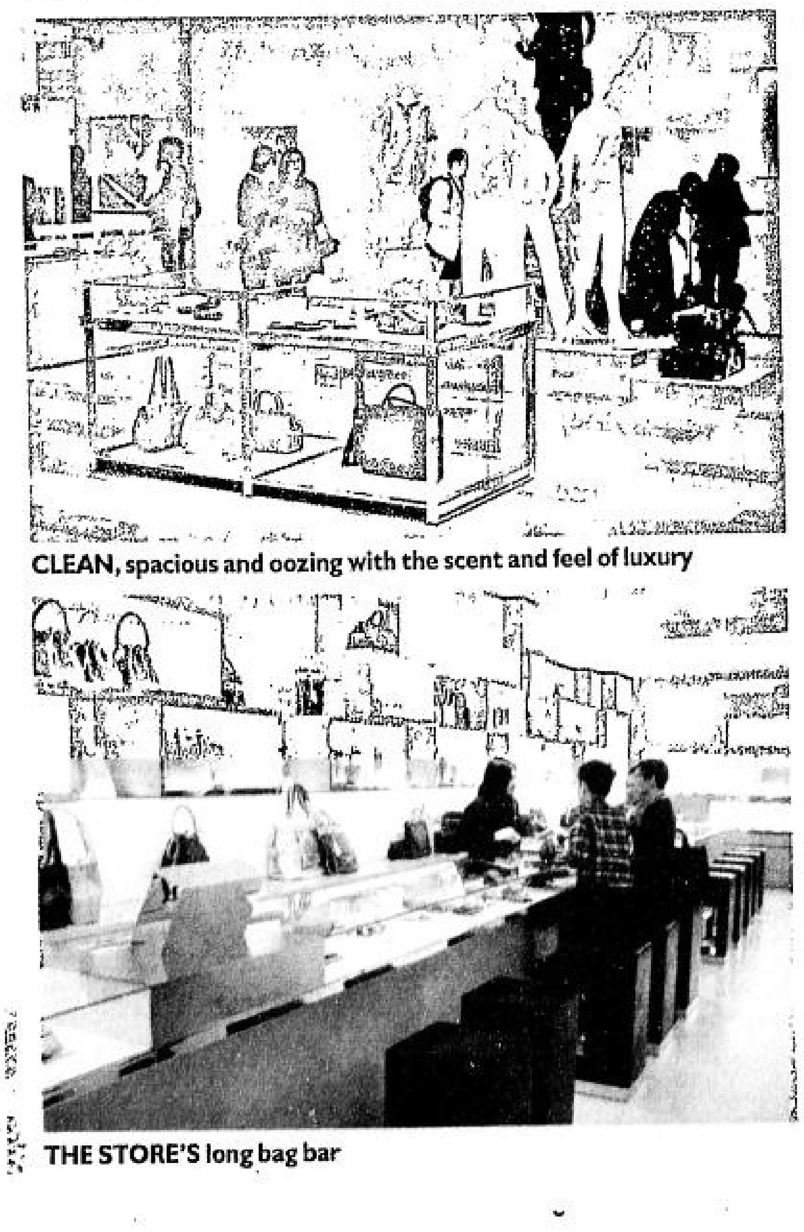
TAKE IT FROM YVES Carcelle, chair and CEO of Louis Vuitton Malletier: The ultimate luxury product is designed to provide you with a range of positive emotions that can last a lifetime.

In contrast, counterfeits can never give you even a minute of pleasure and an ounce of pride. In fact, a great deal of fakes can't even last more than a week before they fall apart or are destroyed altogether.

Strong words, indeed, as one of the world's leading makers of luxury goods recently opened an expanded *maison* or flagship store at the Landmark in Hong Kong, considered by LV executives to be the "beacon" as the 150-year-old French company pushes forward in its conquest of greater China.



CLEAN, spacious and oozing with the scent and feel of luxury



THE STORE'S long bag bar

A growing China is fraught with irony, mind you. While it offers a huge market (third only to Japan and the United States) for luxury goods, it also poses the biggest challenge to the likes of LV, as the country has arguably become the world's biggest source of counterfeit and pirated products.

But Carcelle and his company, which generated a little more than 4 billion euros in total sales last year, were unfazed. LV, which opened its first store in Hong Kong in 1979, owns and operates 360 stores the world over.

"When you buy a Louis Vuitton, you buy 150 years of history, nostalgia, craftsmanship, and the memory of Marc Jacobs' last collection in Paris," he said. "You also buy an architectural statement when you go to our stores."

Carcelle and colleague Serge Brunschwig, managing director of Louis Vuitton Malletier, held a media conference at the Mandarin Oriental before conducting personal tours of LV's three-story shop at Central. They were joined by François Delage, president of LV Asia-Pacific, and architects Peter Marino and Jun Aoki.

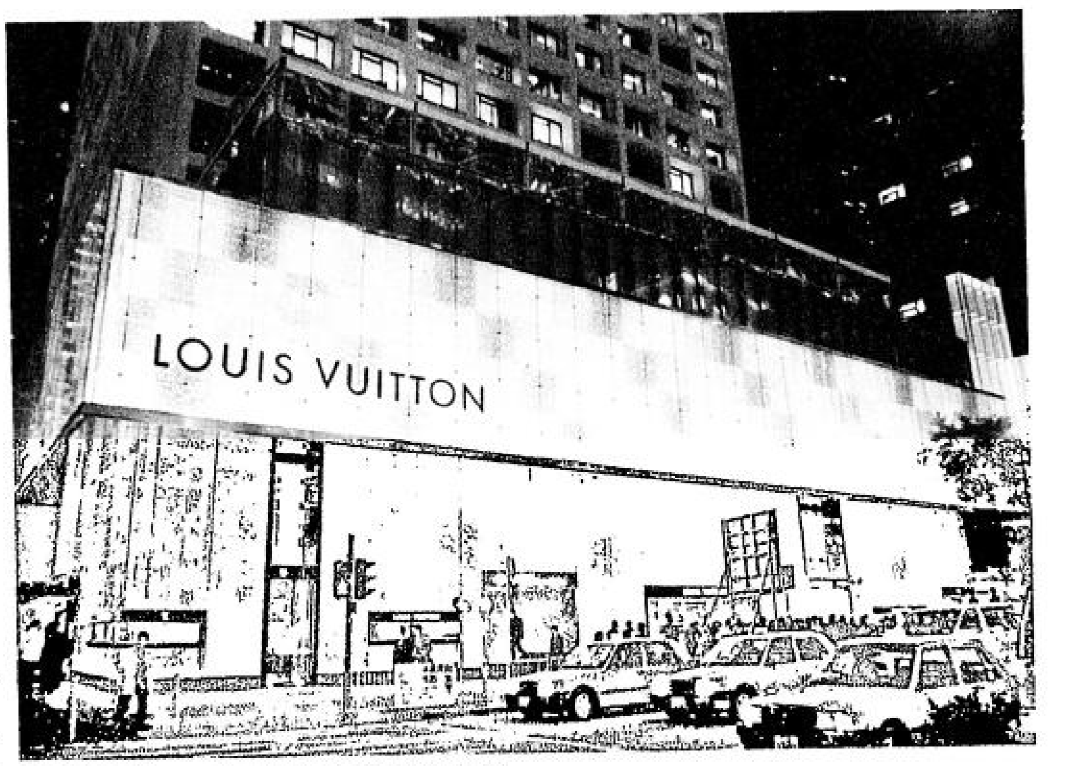
Biggest in Asia

Reportedly the biggest of its kind in Asia-Pacific outside Japan, the Hong Kong store on Pedder Street is comparable to its counterparts on Champs Elysees (Paris), Omotesando (Tokyo) and One East 57th Street (New York).

The spacious store, which wallows in the scent and feel of luxury, consists of three stories, with the basement and second floor devoted to men's and ladies' items—from bags to wallets, shoes to articles of clothing designed by Jacobs.

The first floor, which includes the brand's trademark bag bar and VIP salon, houses the bulk of LV's handbag and luggage collections. Sections are also devoted to watches, jewelry pieces and, for the first time ever, a gallery of the brand's very own sunglasses.

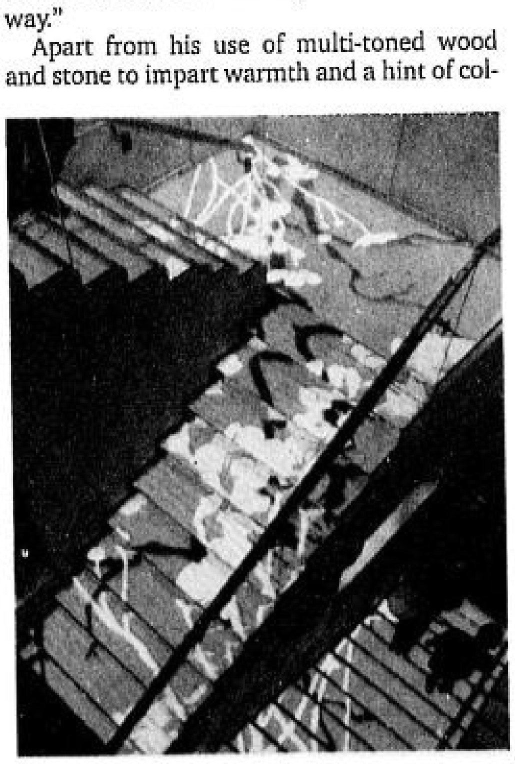
Marino, who has worked on a number of LV stores since 1996, including the recently renovated *maison* on Champs Elysees, came up with rich, if subdued, and well-lighted interiors, while Aoki worked on the store's seemingly transparent façade made from upright blades of cut glass.



LOUIS Vuitton *maison* in Hong Kong by night

"I'm very much into modern architecture," said Marino. "I love using rich materials in a gorgeous, modern way. That philosophy is a reflection of what Vuitton is, a modern brand that uses materials in very much the same way."

Apart from his use of multi-toned wood and stone to impart warmth and a hint of color and texture to the store, Marino took most pride in designing three flights of stairs with glass-incased LCD steps. The stairs, which in a way are emblematic of fashion's mercurial nature, have become a virtual canvas, as they project a series of colored images culled from various artworks every two to three seconds.



THE STORE'S mercurial stairs change image every two to three seconds.

"You can just imagine the amount of engineering that went into building the stairs," he said. "We had 12 prototypes built until we had the right glass with the thinnest piece of metal at the edge."

While Marino drew inspiration by surrounding himself with his favorite LV products as he toiled away in his New York City studio, Aoki walked around the city to get a feel of the Hong Kong scene both by day and night. The result is a façade that seems to change as the day progresses.

"For us Japanese," said Aoki, "Hong Kong has always been an exciting city with key elements that are both Asian and Western. The feeling you get varies as day turns into night. I wanted to capture the city's strong sunshine and its beautiful lights after dark."

Marc Jacobs, LV's artistic director, and Giselle Bundchen, the brand's newest image model, also flew to the former Crown Colony to grace the store's opening. The two also later made an appearance at the LV party, which drew its fair share of Hong Kong's fashionistas and celebrities, at the top of the Landmark.

Alex Y. Vergara

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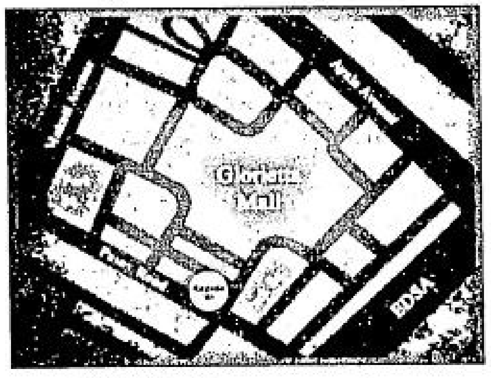
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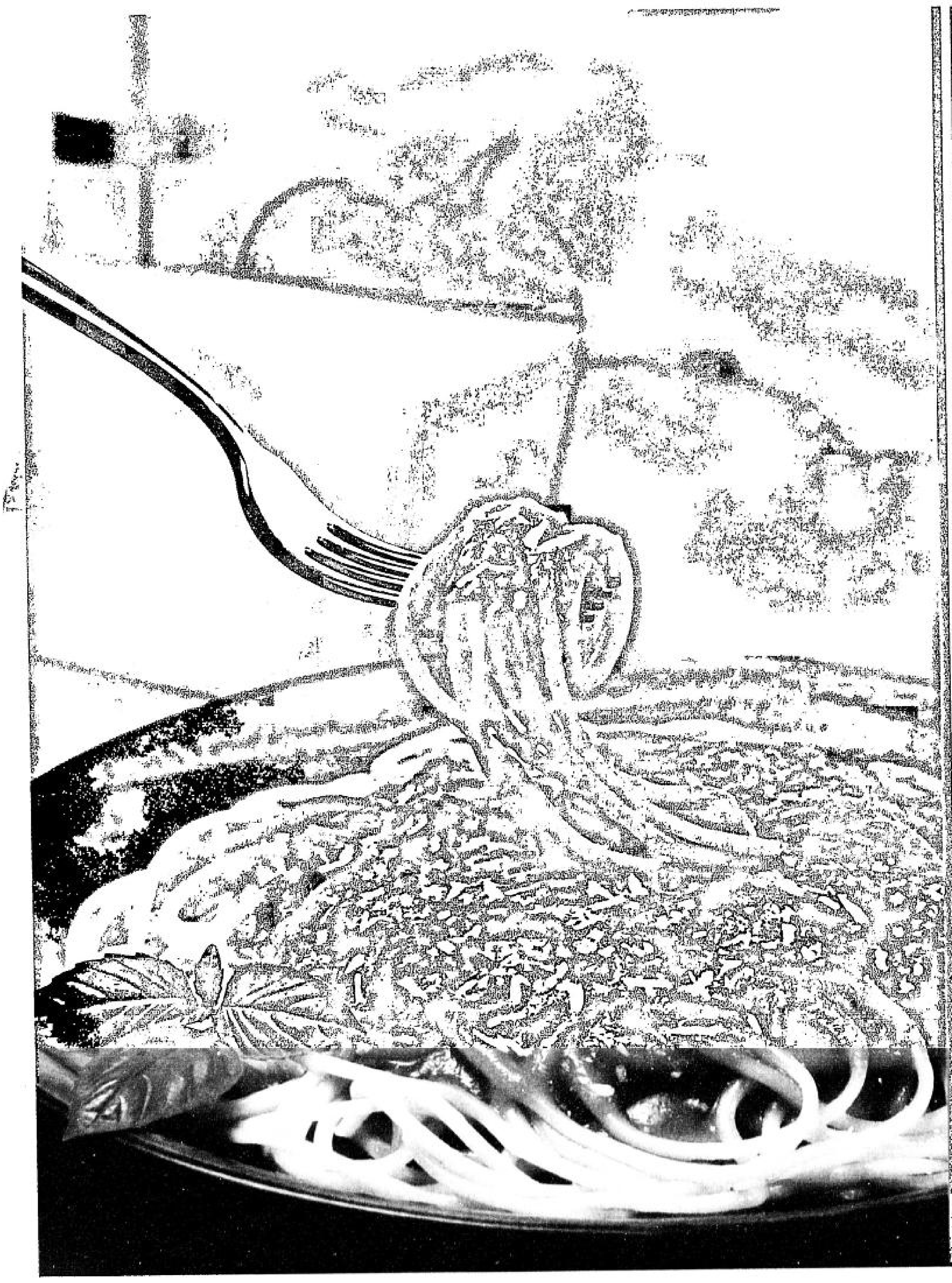

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10 things men must know about women and shopping

By Nedy R. Tantoco

1 If "the quickest way to a man's heart is through his stomach," the quickest way to our heart is a platinum credit card.

2 We measure a man's love for us by the price tag of his gift, so the level of generosity we receive will be reciprocated accordingly.

3 Sometimes shopping may be better than sex, and men shouldn't take that against us just as we don't take it against them if sometimes they prefer sports.

4 Men seek refuge in caves, we seek refuge in stores, preferably the designer variety.

5 When we say, "It's too expensive," what we really mean is, "Buy it for me, please."

6 We take shopping seriously, and so should men. This means: "Do not disturb our shopping hours." Men can always call 117 for emergency.

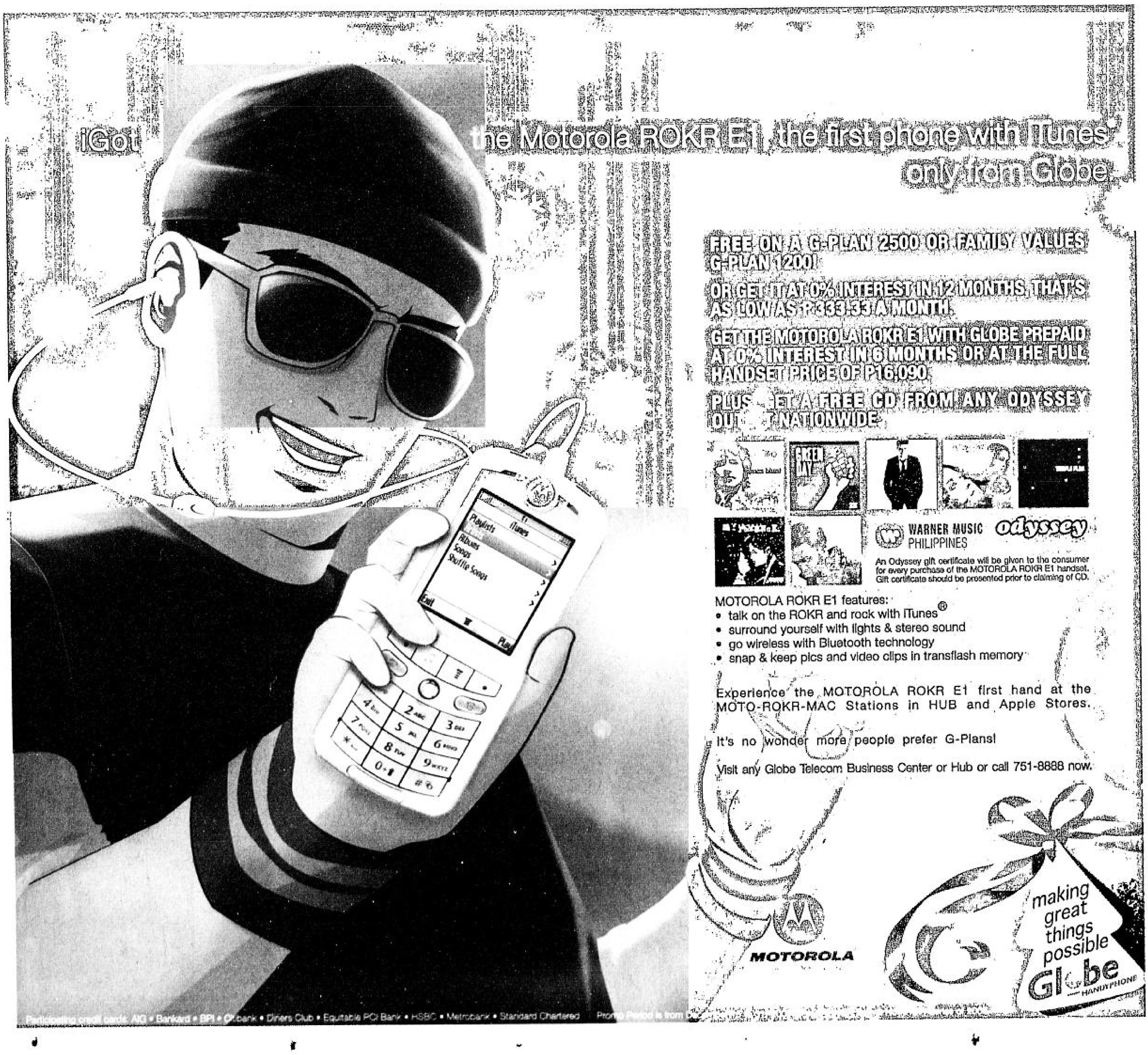
7 Here's a secret: Men can tell a lot about us by observing our shopping habits. If we shop for men, we must love them; if we buy sexy lingerie, we want to please men; if we always buy things we don't really need... be careful, we might take the men to the cleaners!

8 A woman of style will always shop for the genuine article. If we don't settle for imitations or poor reproductions, neither should men!

9 We can never resist a sale event, and it doesn't matter how many there are on the same day—that's what we call multitasking.

10 The easiest route to knighthood for men is by offering to go shopping with us and carry our packages.

ZENAIDA "Nedy" Tantoco started young as a *shoppingera*. Her mother, the late Glecy Tantoco, Rustan's founder, used to take her on buying trips abroad. On school breaks, Nedy would help out at Rustan's wrapping counter, in the stockroom and on the sales floor. After graduation from Assumption College, she became merchandise manager for lingerie and helped out with advertising and display. Later, she was appointed Rustan's EVP/GM and became president in 1987. About that time she founded Stores Specialists Inc., because, she says, "there was a clamor for more brands." She considers Marks & Spencer her best brand acquisition. "My mother and I discovered the world of Marks & Spencer and successfully signed a contract to represent them here." With her 46 brands, including the newly opened Zara (shown here) and Debenhams, Nedy is, without doubt, the diva of high-end shopping.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VOLVO Masters Pro-Am winning team with its Thai pro Thawom Wiratchant (second from left)

VOLVO family Loi Concepcion, Lyn Manalansang, Sea Princess, CEO Albert Arcilla, Selene Lee Yu and Lalaine Boado

TOASTING INQUIRER's 20th anniversary—Alex Prieto, Emily Abrera, Philip Romualdez, Tessie Sy-Coson and Sandy Romualdez

Play and display

TESSA!

Tessa Prieto-Valdes

GOLF IS THE SPORT I grew up with, back in the days when the hip sports were pelota and tennis. To this day, our Sunday dinner conversations at my parents' home are about golf, whether it's the weekend round or what **Tiger Woods** has done lately.

My dear hubby, **Dennis**, had to pick up the sport in order to get past my dear dad, **Alex**. He traded in the world of aces and double-faults for the world of eagles and bogeys. A decade-plus later, Dennis now carries a 9.5 handicap, while I still have the same 23 handicap from when we first met.

Clearly, I am destined for the social side of the sport, the side that wears the latest hats and shoes and only wins in the post-tournament raffles.

> I am destined for the social side of golf, the side that wears the latest hats and shoes

Family pride

Even if I grew up on the golf fairways and have fond memories of pitch-and-putting with my dad, not a single tanner-than-tan golf professional helped with the improvement of my game.

My athletic, competitive sister, **Sandy Romualdez**, is the phenom, making our family proud with her many tournament wins, including six Ladies Club Championships at the Manila Golf Club.

With all her golfing credentials, Volvo Philippines' CEO, Albert **Arcilla** recently asked Sandy to join the Pro-Am tournament for the Volvo Masters of Asia, an Asian PGA Tour event held at the Thai Country Club, a beautiful championship course just outside of Bangkok. This end-of-season showpiece of the Asian Tour had a wonderful Pro-Am, with amateur duffers forming a team with one professional golfer.

As she was so busy with all the festivities surrounding the INQUIRER's 20th Anniversary, Sandy had to beg off, and I have to thank my lucky stars because Albert invited me to play instead.

For the first time, I didn't mind playing second fiddle. I was so looking forward to a fun vacation in Thailand. What better way to shop and squeeze in a round of golf as well!

And Albert is truly a dear. He has also supported our Assumption Batch's badminton tournament for the past two years!

Swing tips

Trying to remember all the swing tips, I played a round with Dennis just before we left for Bangkok. As I hadn't played in a year due to my pregnancy, I realized my golf pants wouldn't fit, my gloves were warped and my Lancôme sun block had expired. So right after playing, I went on a shopping expedition to replenish my stock and prepare my outfits to look great on the course.

As all golfers like to say, "If you can't play, then display!"

Albert so nicely arranged for a chauffeur-driven Volvo S60 T5, a turbo-charged SUV with a sedan-quality ride, to bring us to the airport. While waiting in the PAL Mabuhay Lounge for our flight, I spotted SM taipan **Henry Sy**, who was headed to China for a series of meetings.

He told me he didn't recognize me without all the feathers and the fluff! Considering the early-morning departure, I told him I didn't have time to get flamboyant.

His son, **Big Boy**, introduced his lovely wife, **Princess**. She quickly told me her kids were teasing her because she is **Princess Sy** while I am the Sea Princess. I wish I were Henry Sy's daughter, too! That way I can shop in a different mall everyday! I'm especially looking forward to the opening of Mall of Asia on Feb. 24, 2006.

SM Malls always open on a payday Friday, and not really according to a "feng shui" date, but only because Mr. Sy believes Friday is a very auspicious day. More customers will shop and therefore openings will be great for business.

If we can all think as positively and aggressively as Mr. Sy, I bet our country would be more progressive than our Asian neighbors.

Small world

After checking in at the Club Lounge of the newly refurbished, luxurious Dusit Thani Hotel in Bangkok, Dennis and I headed to Emporium Mall to check out the Christmas shopping scene. At the taxi queue, we heard the couple behind us talking about Emporium, so we offered them a ride.

The world is indeed so small. It turned out **Ben Lim** is the mall consultant of Henry Sy. Ben and his wife were both enjoying some R & R in Bangkok.

The actual day of the tournament was tough because the pick-up time to the course was 5 a.m. Philippine Star writer **Kristine Dayrit** was all ready to play after spending a few days in **Chiang Mai** for a spa holiday. Together with Filipino pro **Angelo Que**, we completed the Philippine team.

The Pro-Am of a golf tournament is "feel-good day" for media and key customers of the sponsor. Nothing bad can happen on Pro-Am day. The format is a modified Best Ball, which means all four of us hit off the tee, then choose the Best ball.

In fact, we thought our little Pinoy team did pretty good, delivering a net score of 62 or 10 under par. That's a pretty good score. Even Tiger would be hard-pressed to deliver a 62.

Imagine our surprise when the winner was announced with a net score of 52! Wow! Those Thai guys, in effect, birdied every hole and had two eagles as well. To do that, you either have guys having a truly excellent game, or guys having truly wrong handicaps or guys having truly unscrupulous use of their pencils. I wonder what Mr. Thaksin would have to say about their scores!

Awesome

Golf at that level of play is something to experience. When you're so close to a professional who can drive the ball over 300 yards or blast out of the sand with ultimate finesse—witnessing that all up close is awesome.

What a splendid trip we had. We enjoyed a spa treatment at Devarana Spa, ate spicy Thai cuisine at Baan Khanitha, shopped at the Night Market and played golf with Angelo Que!

But I was missing my baby **Athena**, too. So with a cooler filled with breast milk, we headed home, picked up by another elegant Volvo—this time an XC 90 with enough luggage space even for me.

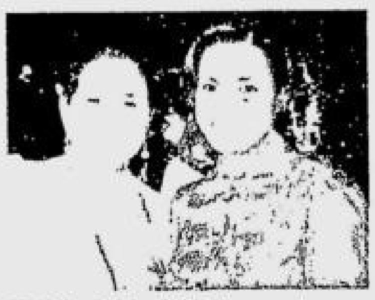
With all these Volvos ferrying me around for the holidays, Dennis is getting worried about my Christmas gift!

E-mail me at seaprincess@inquirer.com.ph

DRIVING range action at the Volvo Masters of Asia

PDI director Karla Delgado with Robina Gokongwei-Pe and husband Perry Pe

SM MOGUL Henry Sy



PDI chair Marixi Prieto and preggy Lea Salonga

PLDT CEO Manny Pangilinan and PDI president Sandy Romualdez

NOKIA family Parikshit Bhasin and Luanne Erni at INQUIRER party

READY to play pros Angelo Que and Rick Gibson

DENNIS Valdes and Kristine Dayrit

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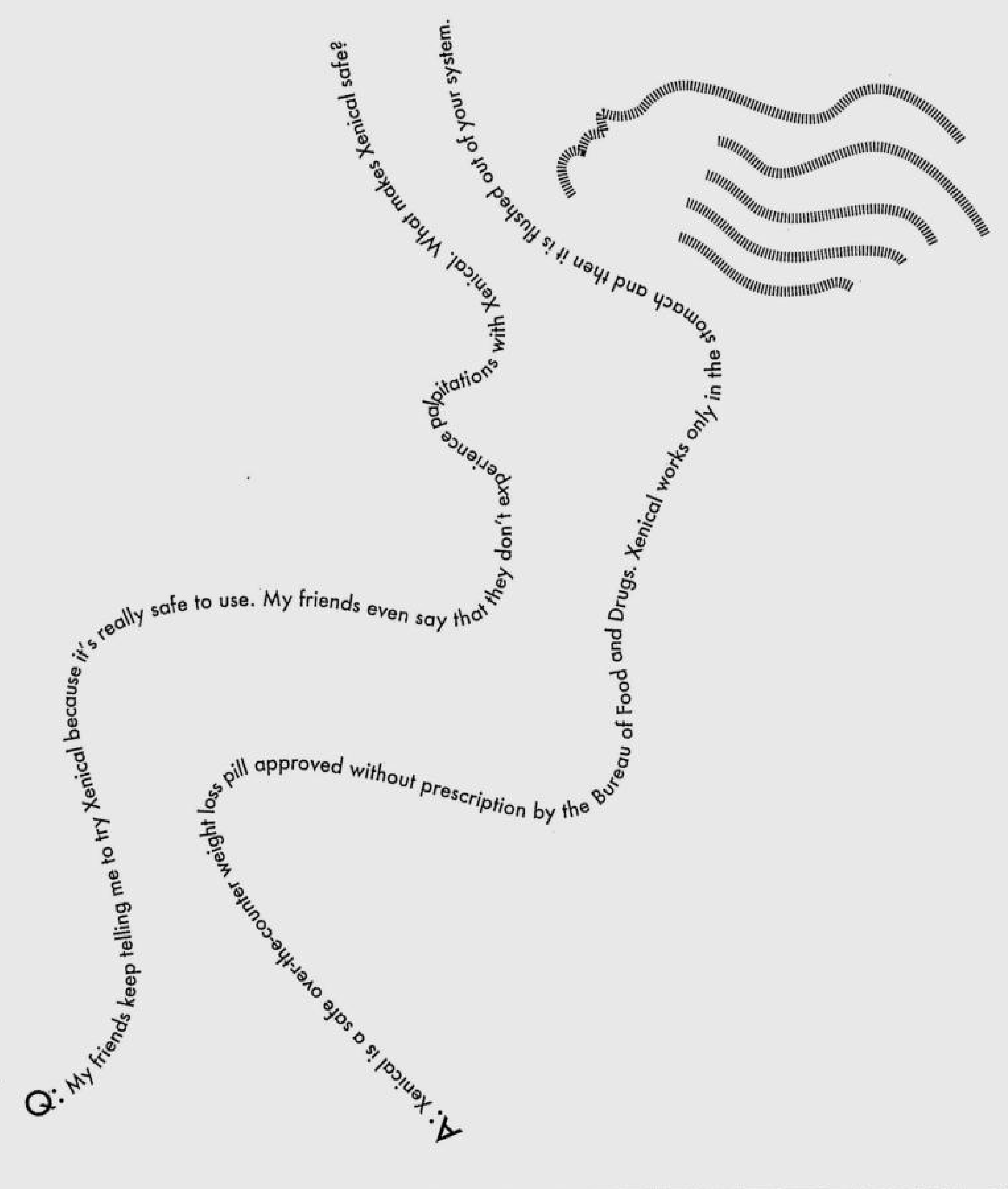
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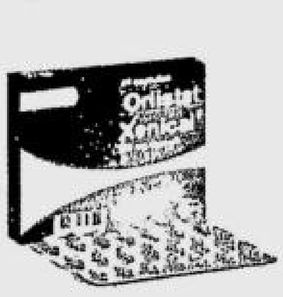

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AT THE SHANG Palace lauriat, from left: Cecilia Rodriguez, Connie Revilles, Babie Go, Virgie Reyes, Oche Golez, Bayani Reyes and Myra Gonzalez

OCHE Golez (seated) with Alain and Tanya (carrying Graciella) Golez and pianist Rudolf Golez

A conspiracy is hatched

CEBU CEBU

Jaime Picornell

RAFAELITA "OCHE" PELAEZ GOLEZ TOOK a breather from her multifarious duties as president of Liceo de Cagayan University in Cagayan de Oro City. She had several good reasons. Access to Cebu is easy, she has a beautiful home in Maria Luisa Park patterned after a Tuscan villa, and her birthday was approaching.

Her children wanted to surprise her. **Dingru Golez**, pianist of note, and **Alain Golez** with his wife, **Tanya**, and their pretty daughter, **Graciella**, started plotting. Drawn into the conspiracy were Oche's dearest friends, asked to be at the Shang Palace of the Shangri-La in Mactan on a certain night.

Babie Go, with the dexterity of Mata Hari, convinced Oche to have dinner with her at the Shang, just the two of them, to discuss an important matter. "Dress up," Baby advised Oche. "You know how elegantly people dress at the Shang."

No problem for Oche; she always looks stunning and radiant. On entering the special room at the Shang, Oche couldn't help musing: Why a special room for 20 or so, when there were just the two of them?

Before Oche could comment, the door was flung open, pink balloons were released, dimmed lights became bright, and everyone was shouting "Happy Birthday!"

"But my birthday is next week," Oche giggled. "Never mind," everyone chorused. "We're having it now."

A sumptuous lauriat was served and, as the evening progressed, Oche announced she'd have a celebration on her actual birthday at her home.

And it was a full day for her. She had the miraculous image of Our Lady of Manaoag enthroned in her private chapel and, in the evening, an elegant dinner was held at the villa's terrace, which has an outstanding view of a Roman garden and myriad city lights. Beyond is the silhouette of Bohol island.

It was a clear night, the sky atwinkle with thousands of stars. Guests were given a rare treat—a shooting star, in all its glory.

"A sign from heaven," Msgr. **Rudy Villanueva** told Oche, who agreed, "Yes, I'm so blessed, and can't thank heaven enough."

A few days later, she was off to Cagayan de Oro, promising to return soon. She is to collect an award from her Alma Mater, Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepcion, as an outstanding alumna in the field of education, as part of the school's 125th anniversary.

And she will perform, for the very first time in public, duets from "Camelot," as Queen Guinevere to **Jun Agravante's** Lancelot. It is a fundraiser, "Arts Council Goes Broadway," which has enlisted the services of Cebu's who's who (the real who's who) into a splendid cast. That's another story. We'll get to that when it happens.

CONNIE Revilles and Vilma Ouano with Our Lady of Manaoag

MSGR. Rudy Villanueva, Rudolf Golez and theater director Benjie Diola (right photo)

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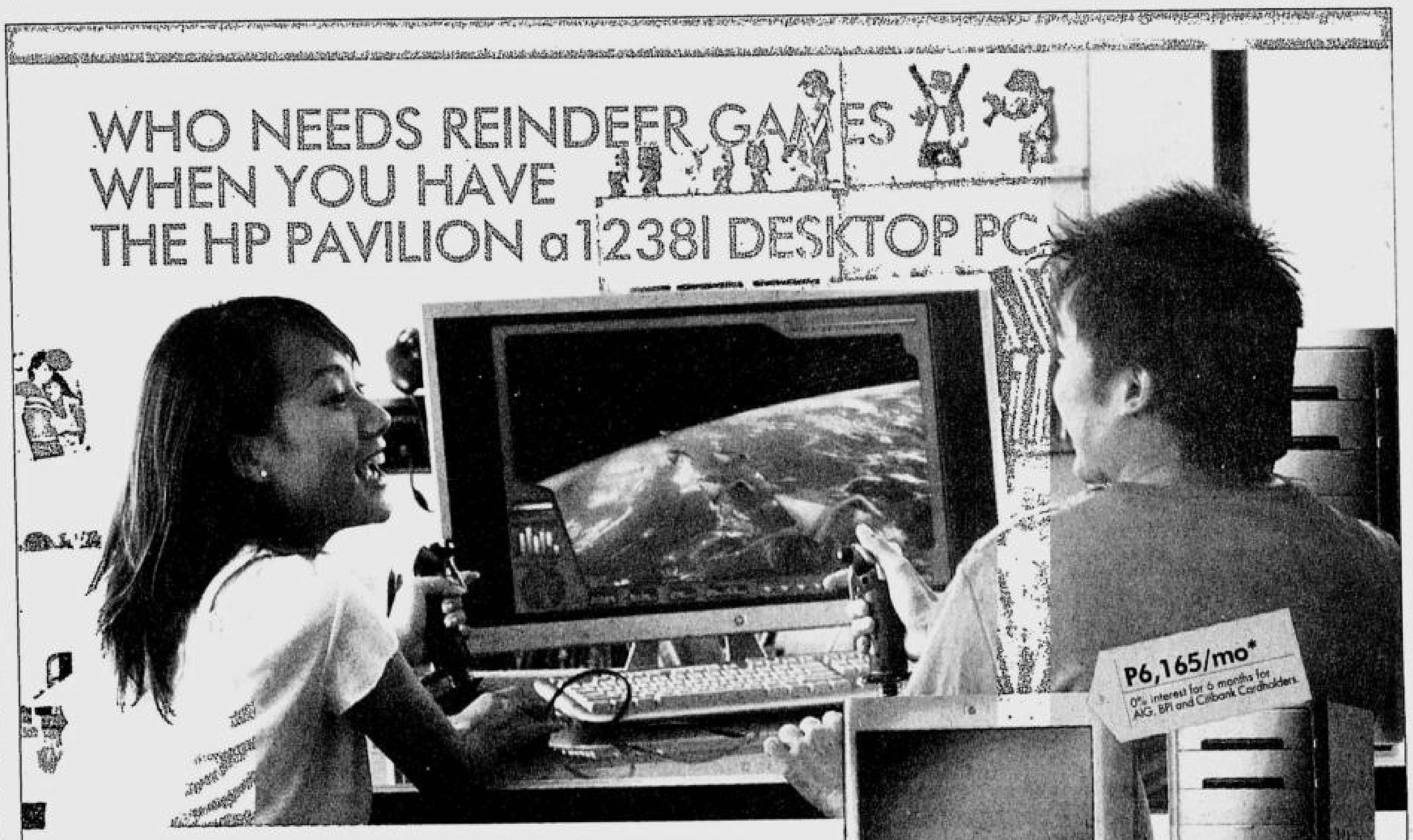

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*Processor speed 2.0GHz

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Sunday LIFESTYLE

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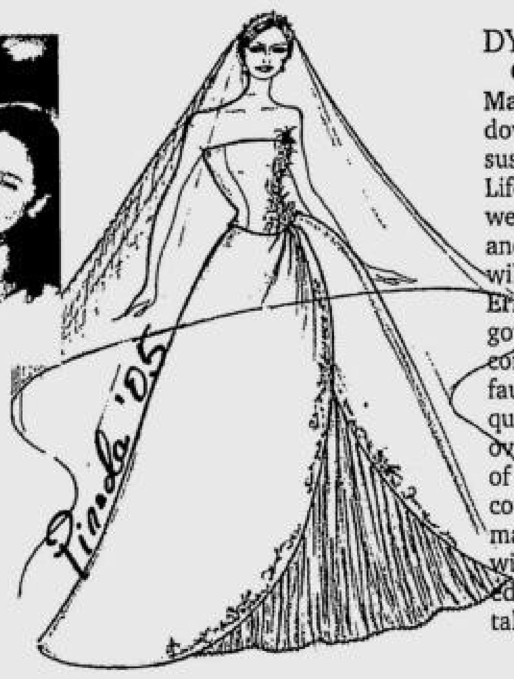
Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the INQUIRER, *P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.*



DY-MARQUEZ

Chi-chi Marquez, daughter of **Marcialito Marquez**, will walk down the aisle of The Shrine of Jesus, The Way, The Truth and The Life in Pasay City on Dec. 21 to wed **Jeffrey Dy**, son of **Benjamin** and Mayor **Jocella Dy**. Reception will follow at the Coconut Palace. **Eric Pineda** designed the bride's gown using ivory balivia silk. The corset top is embellished with faux pearls, caviar beads, sequined butterfly brooches. The overlapping skirt has a petticoat of accordion pleated honeycombed organza in monochromatic blue. A 10-m veil of double-width illusion tulle held by beaded floral pins and Swarovski crystals completes the ensemble.

GAN-LAZARO

Arlene O. Lazaro, daughter of **Alberto** and **Evangelina Lazaro**, will wed **Jonathan V. Gan**, son of **Florencio** (†) and **Anselma Gan**, on Dec. 25, 4 p.m., at the Chapel of Transfiguration in Nasugbu, Batangas.

GALVEZ-REGASPI

Aris Galvez, son of **Alex** and **Teresita Galvez**, will marry **Jeanne Regaspi**, daughter of **Maximo** and **Lourdes Regaspi**, on Dec. 18, 4:30 p.m., at the Cathdral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception. Reception will follow at Father Blanco's Garden, Intramuros, Manila. Edward Teng designed the gown of the entourage and created a classic bustier with a bouffant skirtline duchess satin gown for the bride.

PRECIOUS

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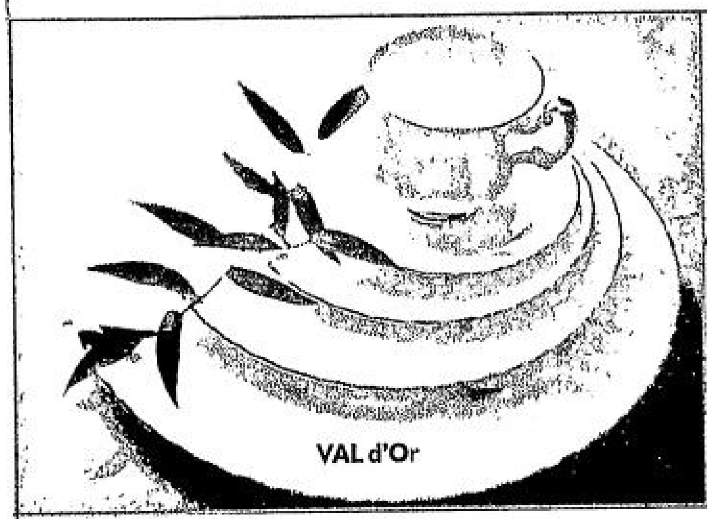
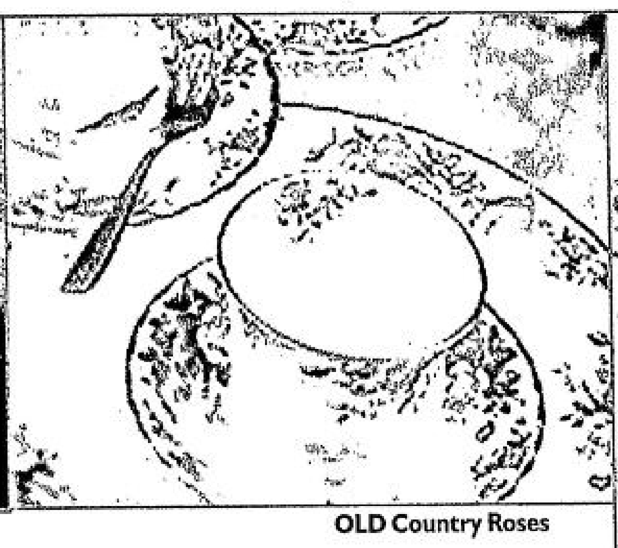
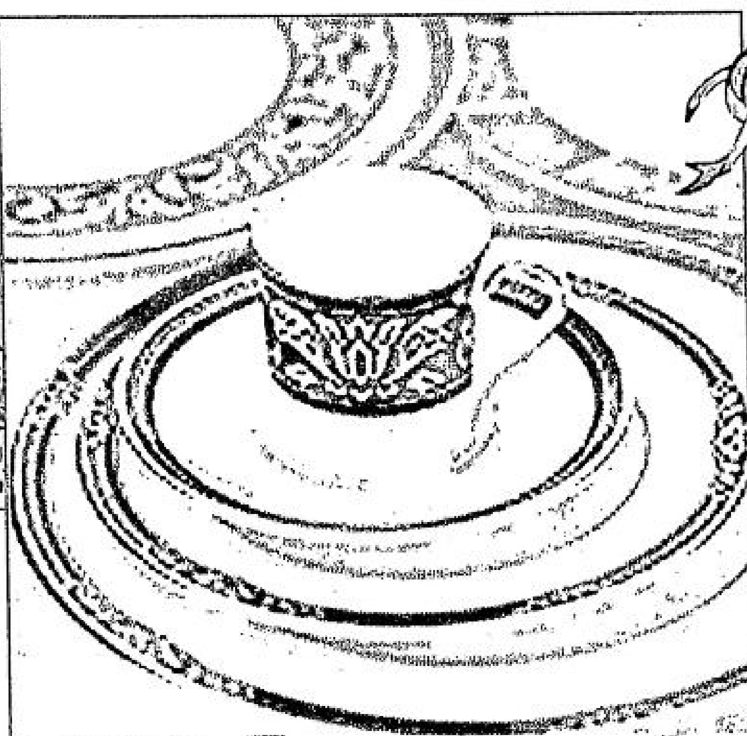


VAL d'Or



OLD Country Roses



TENNYSON

Timelessness of a classic

MOONLIGHT Rose

NEED SOMETHING ELEGANT to give an elegant couple? Fine-bone china is the answer, and nothing represents the art of elegant living more than the Royal Doulton and Royal Albert collection.

Royal Doulton has classic motifs. Its Atlanta line has a striking Greek key bead design in textured deep blue border with platinum edge. Those who favor ornate designs may go for the rococo scroll of its Tennyson line while subtle, gilt-edged grandeur characterizes the Naples line with its neo-classical and monochrome floral patterns.

Royal Albert is characterized by intricate and elaborate floral designs inspired by the English country garden. It favors feminine hues of red, pink, lilac and soft shades of green.

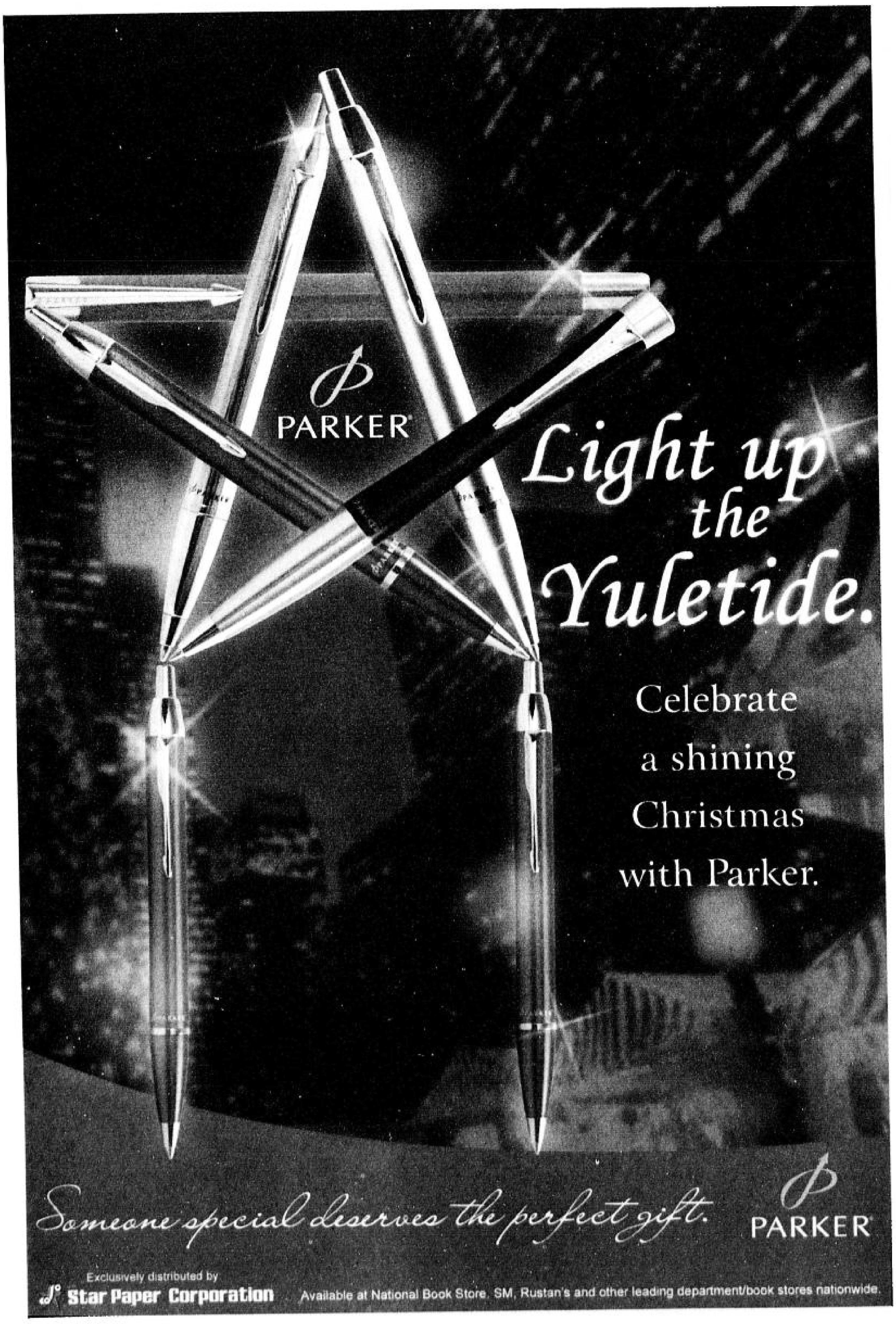
The "Old Country Roses" is one of the most popular fine-bone china patterns produced by this line. It has sold over 100 million pieces since its introduction. The classic design inspired by English roses with a lavish 22-carat gold border, is popular with those who have a passion for florals and a taste for nostalgia and vintage-chic.

Other popular patterns in this line include Lilac Lane Platinum, Moonlight Rose and Val d'Or.

Though one of the oldest makers of fine-bone dinnerware, Royal Doulton has kept up with the times, becoming a modern, thriving, international company whose products are highly recognized and patronized worldwide.

Its unparalleled quality, creativity and innovative designs blend global influence with the distinct English heritage of the company set up by Sir Henry Doulton in the 1800s. Royal Doulton is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation and available at Rustan's Makati.

OLD Country Roses



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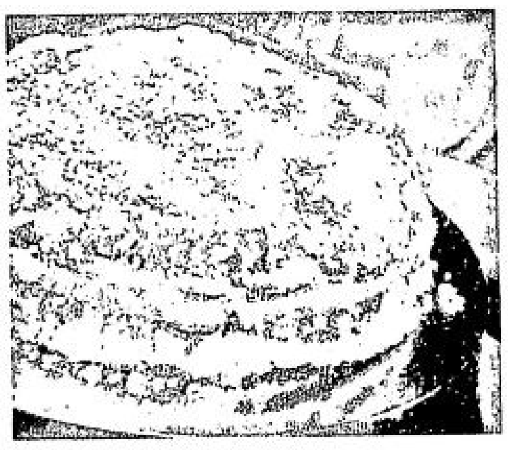
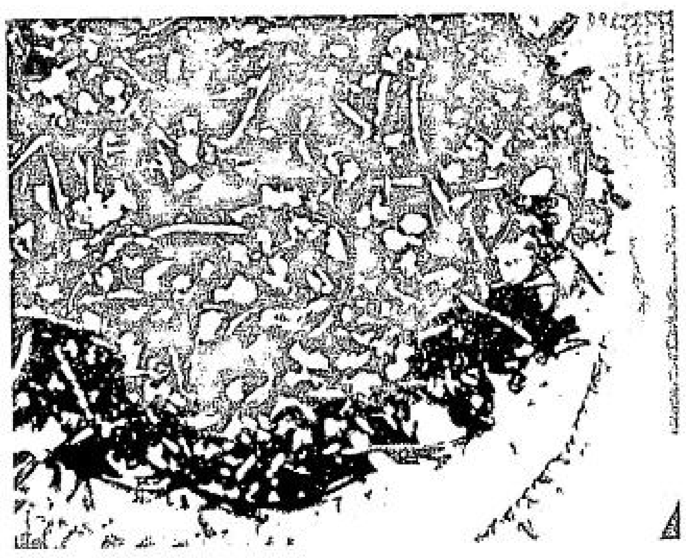
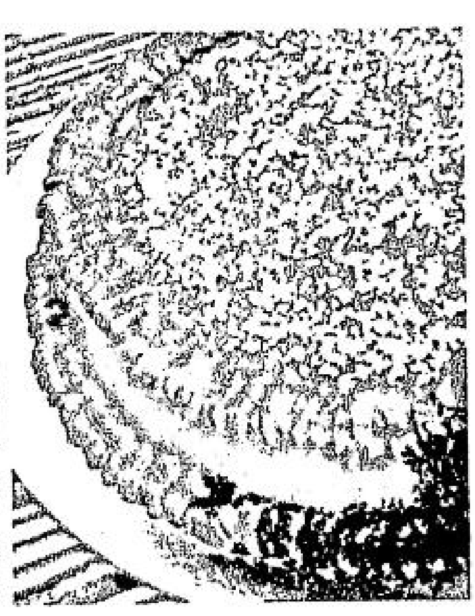
PINK SUGAR IS A VIRTUAL treasure trove of classic desserts prepared the old-fashioned way, which is neither too rich nor too sinfully sweet, located at the Food Boulevard at the ground floor of Shopwise Libis. Bestsellers are the Devil's Food Cake, Honey Crunch Cake, Apple Crumble Pie (extra-large apple chunks and generous heaps of cinnamon), Chocolate Revel Bars, and the house specialty, the Chocolata, among other cakes, cookies and pastries. Pink Sugar also has Christmas gift packs that are perfect for the holidays. Call 9420335 or 0917-7941225 to order.



BLITZ Torte consists of fillings of light custard and pineapple in between layers of butter cake, light meringue, cinnamon and cashew nuts.



ESPRESSO Praline Cake: Two moist layers of chocolate cake filled with Espresso icing and sweet praline topped with chocolate curls and praline bits



CASSATA ala Siciliana: A traditional Italian cake with its unique Italian cream filling of cream cheese, glazed fruits and chocolate chips

Husband's pursuit of dream strains family finances

DEAR EMILY,

My husband resigned from his corporate job more than a year ago. He wanted to earn more than a fixed monthly salary. That idea motivated him. The kids were ecstatic when he's around.

Later, we realized that his work did not deliver the promise of financial security. We missed payments on utility bills, rent and even tuition. Although I am gainfully employed, my salary can only pay for, apart from my credit cards, our monthly expenses for food, part of the salaries of helpers and some medical needs.

When he managed to come up with money for our other obligations, it was usually advance payment for future programs or borrowed from family or friends.

I want him to join the work force again until his business gets off the ground so we'd have less to worry about. But no amount of persuasion can change his mind. He said corporate work didn't give him the fulfillment and happiness he's looking for.

We don't always have enough money for our basic needs though we keep a very modest lifestyle. This makes us short-tempered when bills come. He blows his top over nothing and I always get the brunt of it. Sometimes I only communicate with him through text messages so I am not interrupted in mid-sentence, which happens when I ask for money for household expenses like salaries for our help, etc. He treats me like I'm a spoiled heiress who only wants to burn money.

My kids and I don't deserve this kind of life with no security and peace of mind. I feel it is my responsibility to find a better-paying job if I want a better life for our family. I know I said very hurtful words but they're the truth and I want him to realize that.

Now, he wants to leave me. He says I value money more than his happiness.

I wasn't asking for a car, a house, jewelry or clothes. All I want is for us to keep our good credit/financial standing. His insecurity in not being a good provider is pulling us apart.

He hasn't left the house yet, but he doesn't sleep in our bed anymore. We don't speak. He doesn't even look at me. When I talk to him, he growls. His pent-up anger is killing me. I love him so much despite his shortcomings. He's the only one who makes me truly happy. I thought, "*Sige, ako na lang kakayod.*"

I tried looking for a better paying job and other sources of income but I haven't been lucky yet. In the meantime, we have obligations. I dread the time when we'd have to argue again about money. Where do you draw the line between idealism and pragmatism?

How do I reconcile with my husband without abandoning my stand on the matter?

DESPERATE HOUSEWIFE

How do you solve a problem like a hard head? How do you tell him that you're not his enemy but a partner in this hardship? How indeed?

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Marcelo

'He wants to leave me, saying I value money more than his happiness'

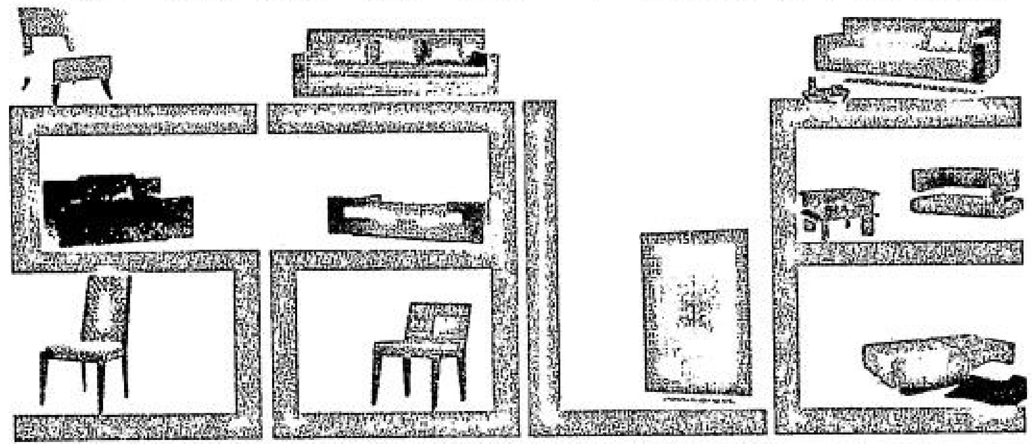
Forget about talking to him to get a job. Not yet. Might as well get a rock and hit your head with it. That's probably not nearly as painful as arguing with him! His reality seems so small and narrow that a kid might understand your predicament better. You're so desperate making ends meet that you two can't hear what the other is saying. Is anyone even right?

You want him employed and be a breadwinner again. But he thinks that, with a little push and more luck, this singular vision of making his business good will be the answer to all your money problems. Had he been lucky, you wouldn't be writing me this letter.

If you want change to happen, adjust your lifestyle. Do it with quiet determination. Let go of your maids. Do all the work yourself when you get home from the office. Turn off amenities like air-conditioning. You won't die without it. Cancel your cable television subscription and credit cards, too. These creature comforts eat up a big chunk of your budget. Put your kids in public school. The schools are not bad. Just supervise your children's studies well.

Too drastic? Didn't you want a solution to your frustration? Haven't you been crying out for help? Isn't this plan a scream? Loud—but simple enough to teach your husband how a one-income family lives! Make him see you mean business—on your own terms. This might wake him up. If he insists on pursuing his dream and leaves you—you can cross that bridge after he builds it.

E-mail the author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph, Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to INQUIRER. *Listen to Ms. Marcelo co-host the program "Kalikasan Vigilante," 7:15-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dwBR 104.3 FM.*



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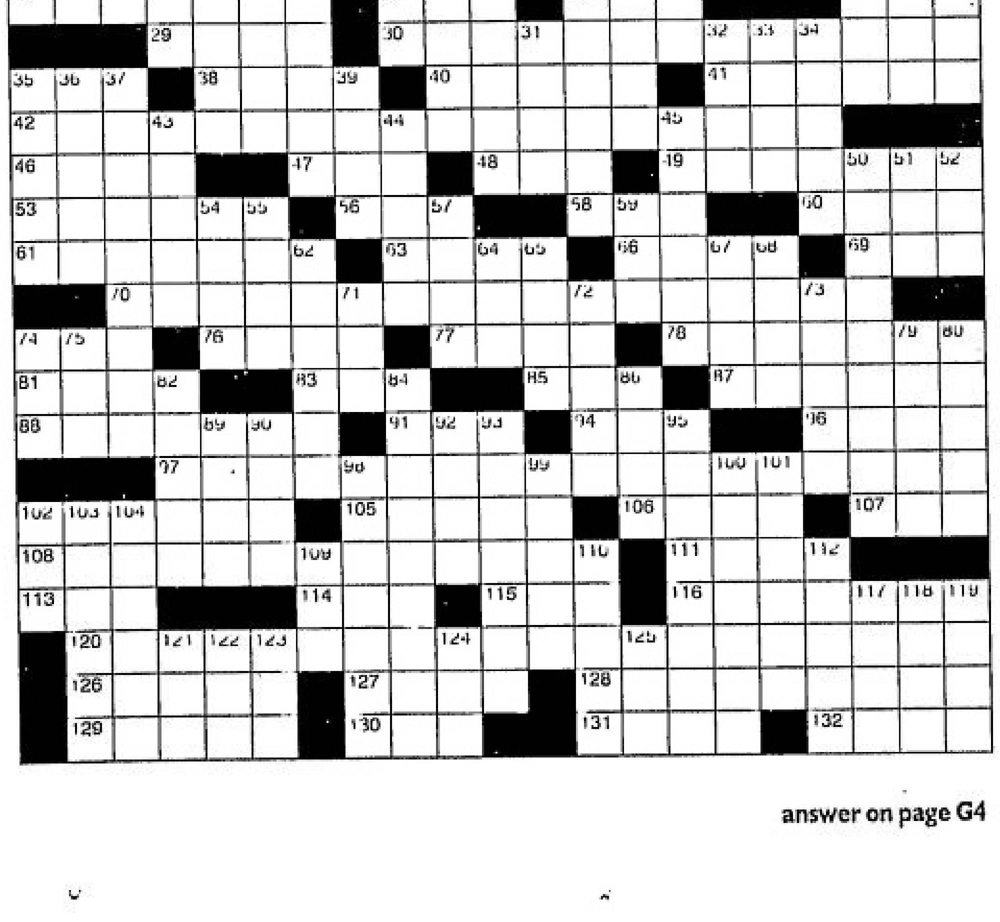
ACROSS
1 "Follow me!"
5 Mist
9 Dissenting vote
12 Siouan Indian
17 It's hardly a bestselling book
19 Stitch's cartoon partner
20 755-homer Hank
21 Start of a riddle
24 Actress Redgrave
25 Holiday drink
26 Meyers of movies
27 Actor's prompt
29 "Be that — may ..."
30 Riddle, part 2
35 Fluffy scarf
38 Many millennia
40 Bach's "— the G String"
41 El — (legendary treasure city)
42 Riddle, part 3
46 Head, in Haiti
47 Boozer
48 PC key abbr.
49 Gathered
53 Blundering
56 Mint-condition
58 Grounded bird
60 For takeout
61 Tyros
63 Play part
66 Very little, as of ointment
69 Spoil
70 Riddle, part 4
74 Form 1040 pro
76 Twin in Genesis
77 Prefix with hertz
78 Shiny fabrics
81 "It's — thing"
83 School gp.
85 Wanted-poster abbr.
87 Mere semblance
88 Sardou play on which a Puccini opera is based
91 Monopoly has four: Abbr.
94 Nation east of Arg.
96 "Hamlet" soliloquy starter
97 Riddle, part 5
102 Manias
105 Goaded
106 Braving the waves
107 Ball balancer
108 End of the riddle
111 "What more can —?"
113 Health resort
114 What it takes to tango
115 Major CA airport code
116 Most dull, in Dover
120 Riddle's answer
126 Pastoral poem
127 Bear young, as sheep
128 Basically
129 Join in a common cause
130 Thesaurus wd.
131 Went by cab, e.g.
132 Tag with a PG, e.g.

DOWN
1 Roman 404
2 Notes after re
3 Muscat is its capital
4 Where Hercules slew a lion
5 More like an equine
6 Pilots
7 Buddhism branch
8 1985 Kate Nelligan title role
9 Naught
10 Suddenly
11 Butler's question
12 With 119-Down, acorn dropper
13 Lose firmness
14 "— you kidding?"
15 "Aha!"
16 Resulted
18 Bahamian capital
19 Wet fun-park attraction
22 Erin of "Happy Days"
23 Make a lap
28 Roxy Music's Brian
31 Purple flower
32 Yellow cheese
33 Nick Jr.'s "explorer"
34 Twist to pull free
35 Dog to beware of
36 Colorado county
37 Spacesuit donner
39 When a clock's hands meet
43 Timex alternative
44 Wombs
45 Riyadh residents
50 Put in order
51 Self-love
52 E-mail address part
54 Evening, informally
55 Turns right on horseback
57 Drudgery
59 Pas' other halves
62 Attack like a turtle
64 Floral garland
65 Actress Raines
67 "Woe is me"
68 Playwright Henley
71 Boy Pharaoh
72 Li'l Abner's last name
73 "Cool!"
74 Low- — (lite)
75 British Open org.
79 High-minded
80 Krona spender
82 "Wowie!"
84 Pittsburgh Steelers owner for 55 years
86 Length times width
89 Cast off
90 Job for Sherlock
92 Giant in spaghetti sauce
93 Cowboy hat
95 Lacking one's John Hancock
98 Metro systems
99 Benefit morally
100 Fragrant Chinese blossom
101 Stengel and Kasem
102 "Survivor" network
103 Fix
104 Actress Donohoe
109 Corroded
110 "— With Love" (Sidney Poitier film)
112 Bandleader Kay
117 Sicilian volcano
118 Religious branch
119 See 12-Down
121 Olive of comics
122 Unwell
123 Crafty
124 Bert Bobbsey's twin
125 Year, in Portugal



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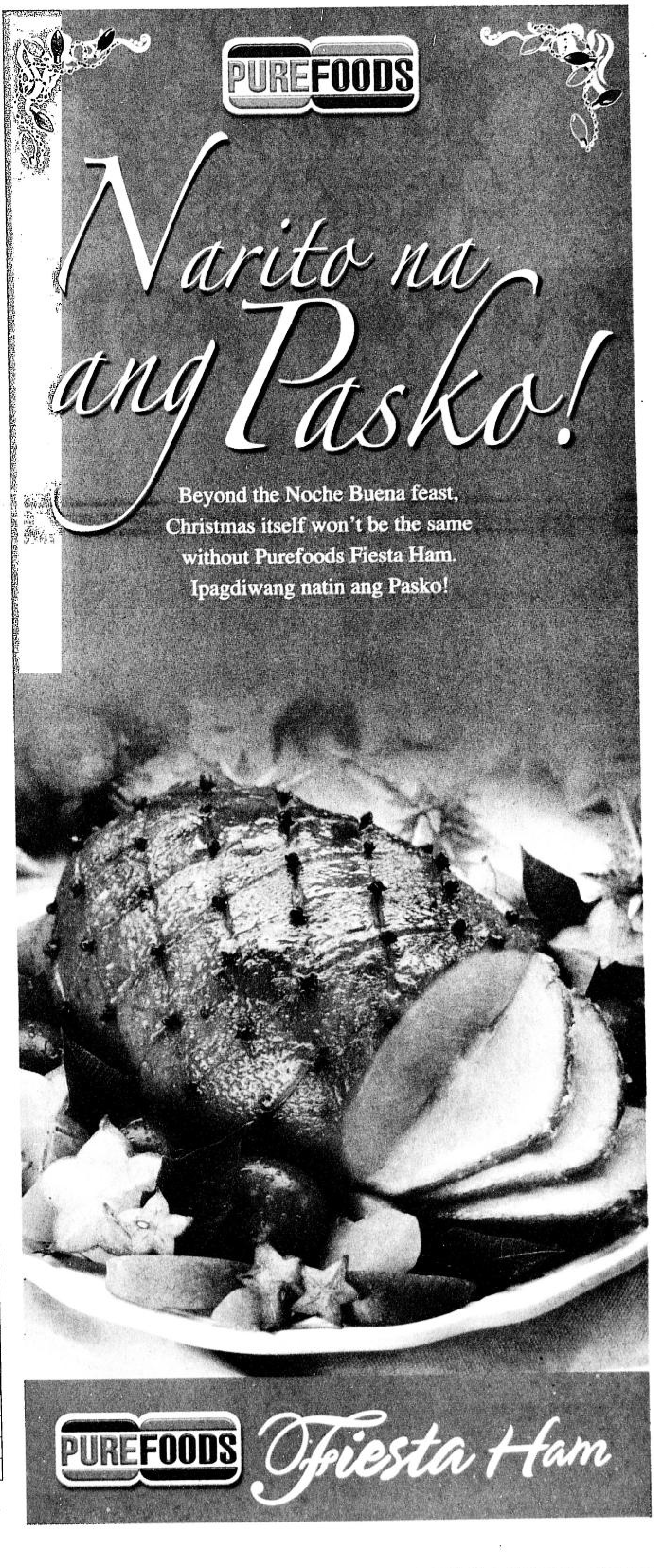

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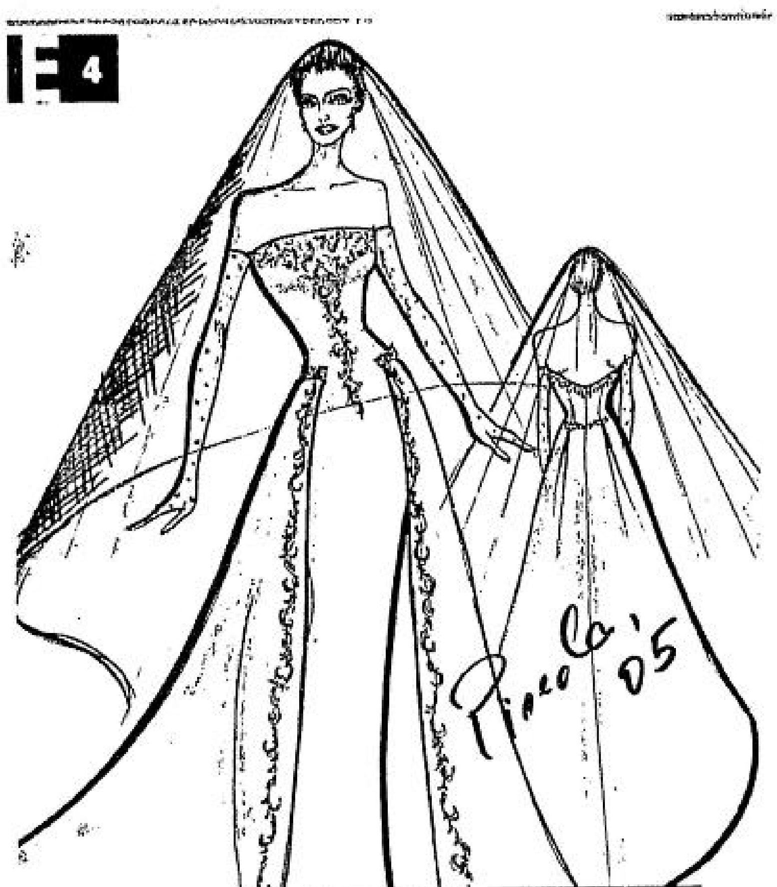
Beyond the Noche Buena feast, Christmas itself won't be the same without Purefoods Fiesta Ham. Ipagdiwang natin ang Pasko!
PUREFOODS Fiesta Ham

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the INQUIRER, *P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.*



BARLAO-ONGPAUCO

Madelaine Ongpauco, daughter of **Bonifacio Ongpauco Jr.** and **Asuncion Ortega**, will wed **Giovasco Barlao**, son of **Wilfredo** and **Daisy Barlao**, on Dec. 19 at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Intramuros, Manila. Reception will follow at the Sunset Pavilion, Westin Philippine Plaza. **Eric Pineda** designed the bride's gown using ivory duchess satin.

VALENCIA-PACANA

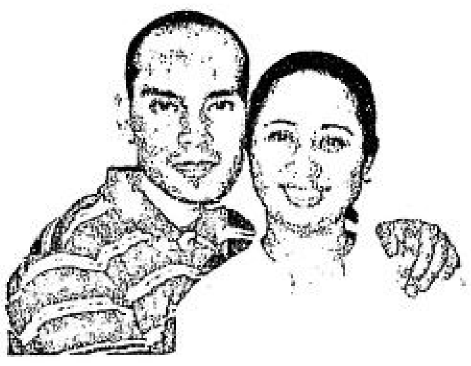
Engineer **Tomas Ian Valencia Jr.**, son of **Perla Carreon vda de Valencia**, and **Karen Hope Pacana**, daughter of **Salvador Nagac Pacana Jr.** and **Lourdes Evero Pacana**, will wed on Jan. 7, 2006, 3 p.m., at San Lorenzo Ruiz Chapel. Reception will be held at Marco Hotel, Alwana Business Park, Cugman, Cagayan de Oro City.

RAMOS-TAMAYAO

Rocelle Tamayao, daughter of engineer **Rolando** and **Florence Tamayao**, will marry **Vicente Ramos**, son of Dr. **Miguel** and **Nenita Ramos**, on Dec. 29 at St. Ignatius Cathedral, Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Reception will follow at Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Ortigas. The bride and groom will wear **Edwin Uy** creations.

REFUERZO-LUNA

Raymond Ross Refuerzo, son of **Milagros Refuerzo**, will marry **Eileen Luna**, daughter of **Joaquin** and **Pacita Luna**, on Dec. 26 at St. John Bosco Parish in Makati City. Reception will follow at the grand ballroom of the New World Renaissance Hotel, also in Makati. The bride will wear a classic 1950s gown of four-layered two-toned organza and shantung. **Junel Lim Gallon** did the gowns and will make the fresh flower arrangements.

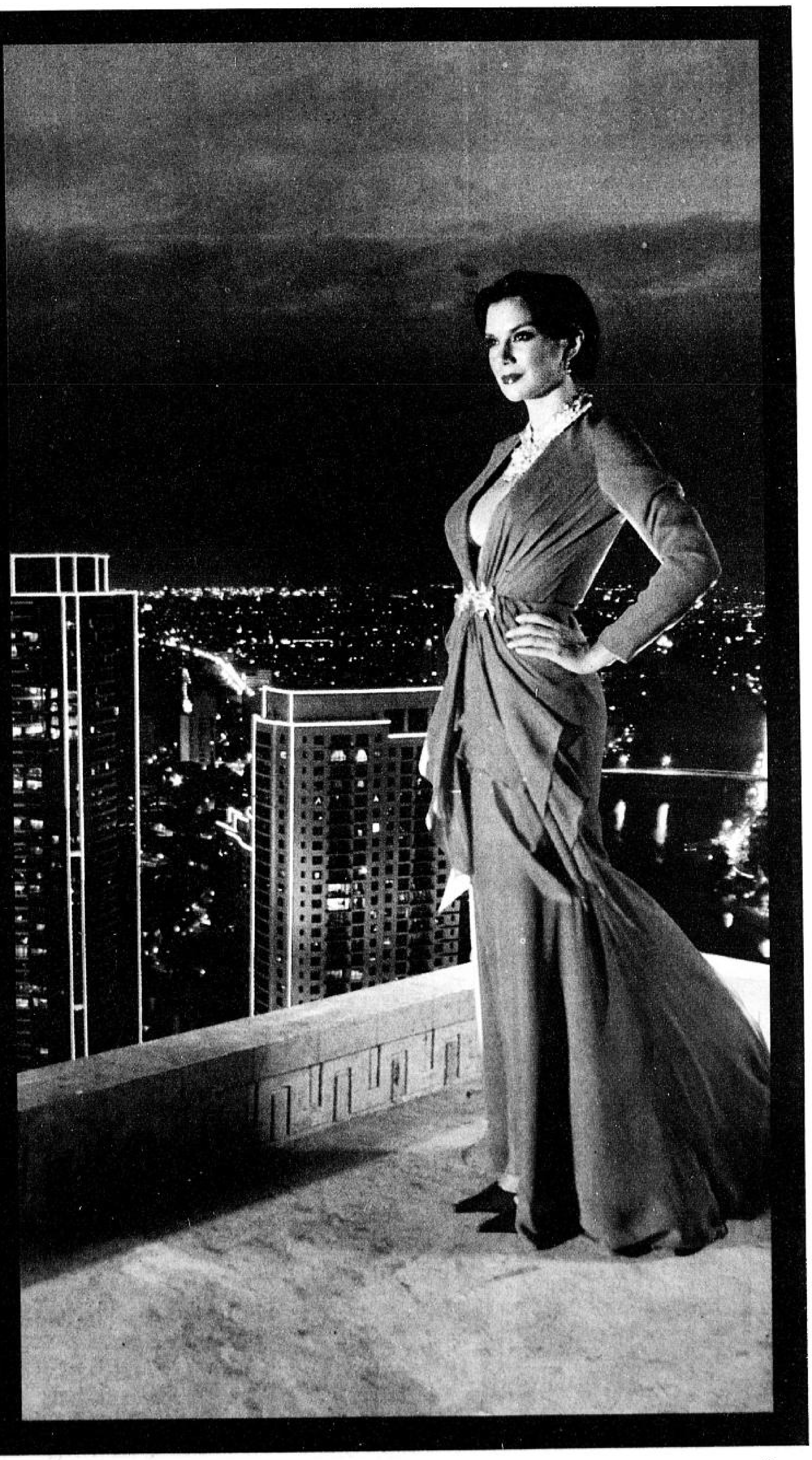


BERSAMINA-MARTINEZ

Engineer **William Bersamina**, son of **Ruben** and **Laureana Bersamina**, will marry **Chey Martinez**, daughter of **Zenaida Martinez**, on Dec. 18 at Nuestra Señora de la Asuncion Parish in Maragondon, Cavite. Reception will be held at La Posada, Filipinas Paradise Complex in Sabang, Naic, Cavite.

AMONCIO-ABAD

Anthony Amoncio and **Abi Abad** were married recently at Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati. Reception was at the Isla Ballroom of Edsa Shangri-La, Manila. Event coordinator was **Jun Hen**, cake was by Dexter's.



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Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel
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大都會客運
WOW

TOURISM Sec. Joseph Durano and wife Carmen pose with Mr. and Ms Philippine Tourism in Taiwan at the Chiang Kai Shek Memorial in Taipei

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RP 'buses' lure Taiwan travelers

The Philippines is eager to sustain impressive increases in the number of tourists from its neighbor

Text and photos by Vangie Baga-Reyes

IF LONDON HAS TAXICABS promoting the Philippines' scenic spots, in Taipei, capital of Taiwan, sleek buses are doing the job.

The public utility vehicles bear the words "Wow Philippines" against a backdrop of such tourist attractions as the clear blue waters of Subic, the historical sites in Cebu, the brightly colored *vintas* of Zamboanga.

Making the images even more attractive are a man and a woman in swimwear, each sitting on top of a whale.

"They are the Mr. and Ms Philippine Tourism in Taiwan," proudly declared Gerry Panga, tourism representative of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office (Meco)-Tourism Center in Taiwan.

Taiwanese Brian Chou, 28, and Japanese Hsiang Ma-Chen, 22, are the celebrity endorsers for Philippine tourism in Taiwan. They did not win in a beauty pageant, but were chosen because of their "love for the Philippines."

Each has a television travel show in Taiwan, where the Philippines has been featured several times.

Chou has been to Palawan, Subic, Banaue, Davao and Manila, while Hsiang, who speaks Mandarin, hosts a travel show in Japanese (Formosa TV) aired in Taiwan. She's been to Cebu, Davao, Manila and Subic.

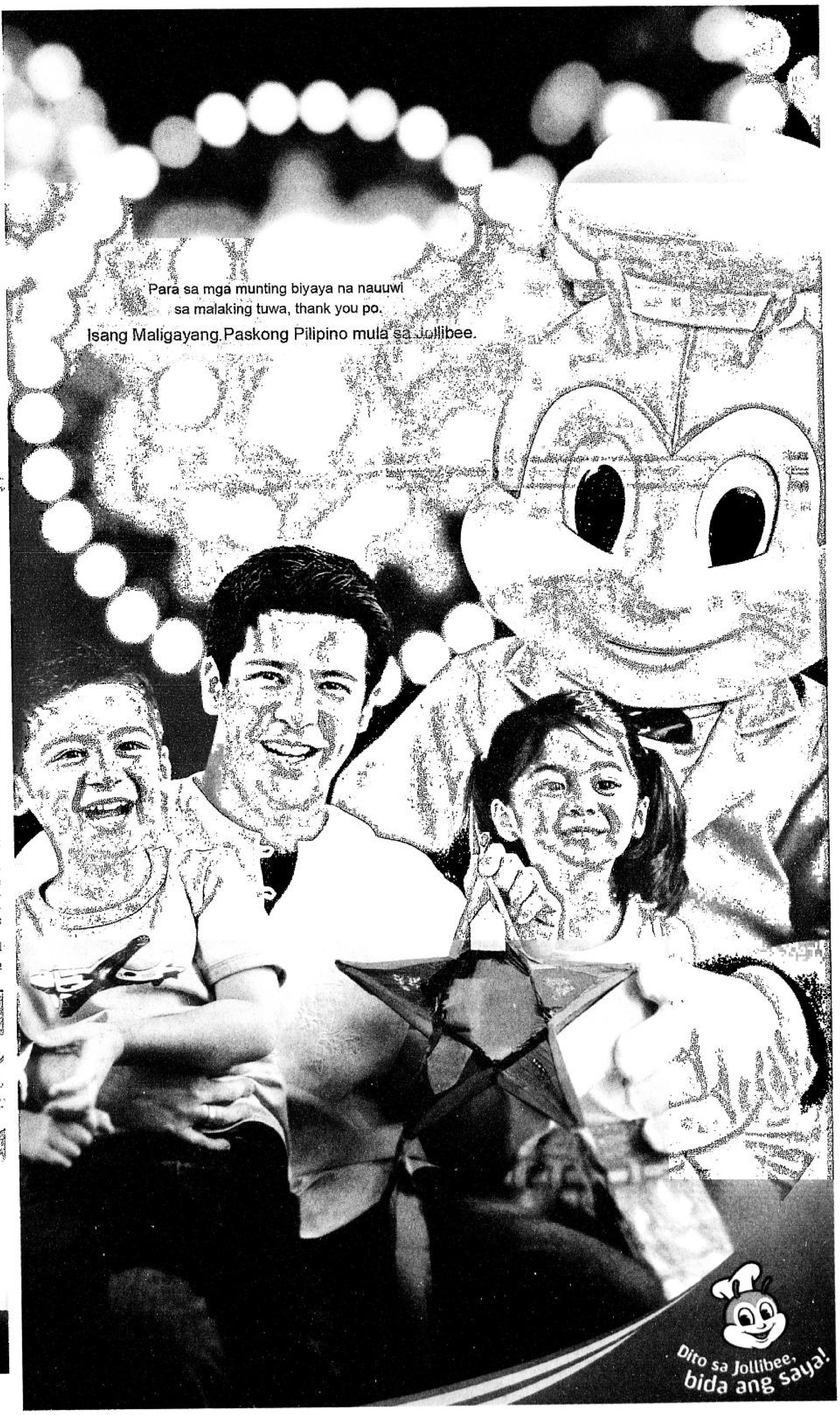
"Even before we became Philippine tourism promoters, we'd been to the Philippines several times and each time we visited we had beautiful memories of the country," said Chou, who, like Hsiang, is a model and an actor in Taiwan. Chou stands 6'1", Hsiang is 5'3".

As special Philippine tourism envoys, Panga explained, they were tasked to promote the good image of the Philippines, and to encourage the Taiwanese, the youth, young professionals and middle-aged office executives to visit the country.

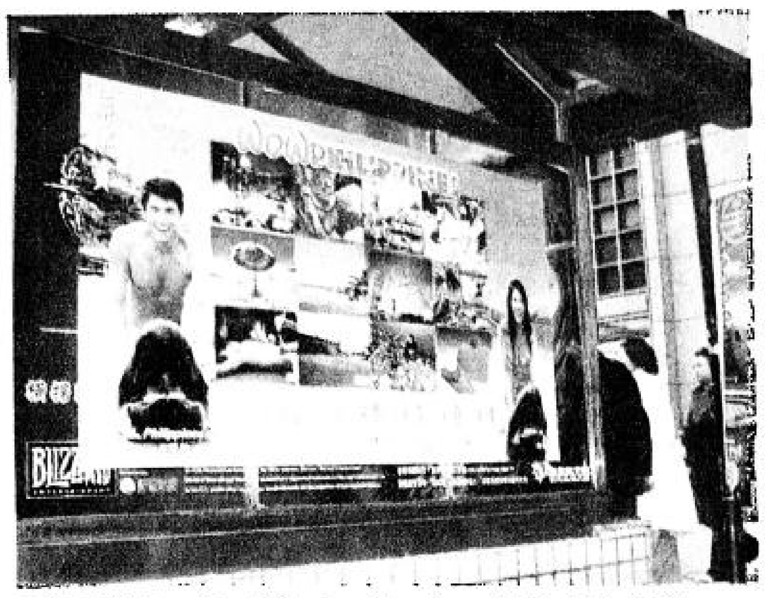
The celebrity duo did recently a pictorial

RP 'BUSES'/ F2

BAYANIHAN Dance Troupe performing Philippine folk dances at Taipei travel fair


Para sa mga munting biyaya na nauuwi
sa malaking tuwa, thank you po.
Isang Maligayang Paskong Pilipino mula sa Jollibee.
Dito sa Jollibee, bida ang saya!

PHILIPPINE tourism promoters in Taiwan: Sec. Joseph and Carmen Durano, special RP tourism envoys Brian Chou and Hsiang Ma-Chen, and the Bayanihan Dance Company led by Lito Vale Cruz



BILLBOARD touting Philippine attractions at Taipei City Mall

RP 'buses' lure Taiwan travelers

From page F1

and destination shoot in Davao and Subic that would be part of the promotional materials and publicity campaign for the winter and Chinese New Year break.

"With the appointment of Chou and Hsiang, the Philippines takes its marketing offensive to a higher level. We have such a big market in Taiwan and sharing their wonderful travel experiences in the Philippines will definitely help boost our tourism."

Asked how much the endorsers were being paid for their jobs, Panga replied: "Pro bono."

Aggressive campaign

The Philippines' tourism promotion in Taiwan seemed to be paying off with the country registering the highest Taiwanese arrivals in Asia in August and September this year.

Based on latest Meco figures, more than 12,000 Taiwanese tourists arrived in the Philippines in August, higher by 28 percent than the figure for the same time last year. In September, 11,000 arrivals were recorded.

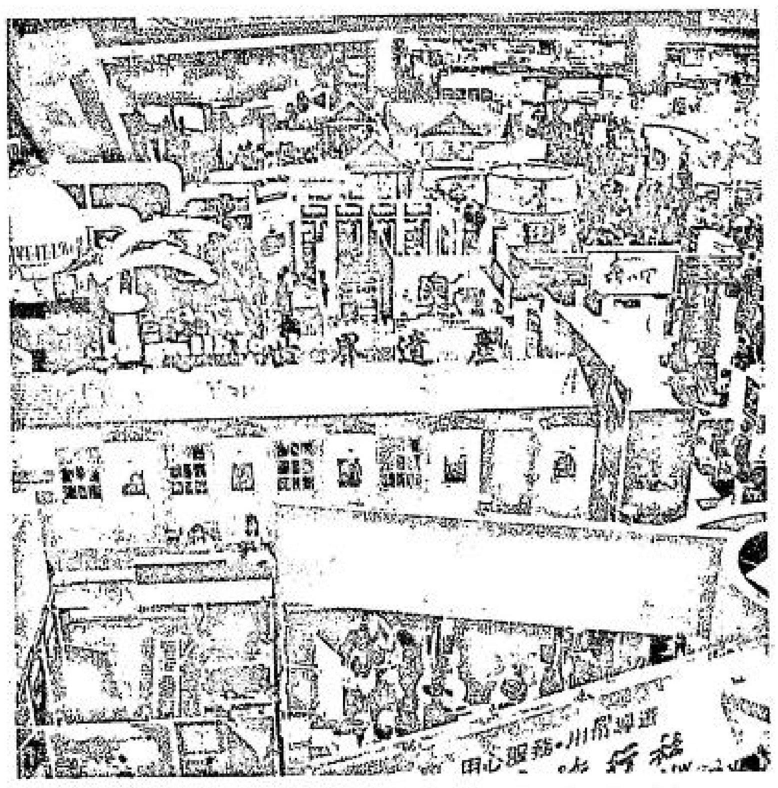
"We have fully recovered from the initial effects of the post-tsunami travel slowdown as shown in the renewed confidence and resurgence of Taiwanese arrivals in the country," noted Tourism Sec. Joseph Durano. "The Philippines' arrival growth rate is far higher than the overall monthly [increase in the number of] Taiwanese [travelers] in the third quarter this year."

Eva Air, the Taiwanese carrier, reportedly overshot its target for passenger volume to the Philippines in October and November this year. It is adding two flights to the Philippines to service the expected bigger volume for Chinese New Year in January.

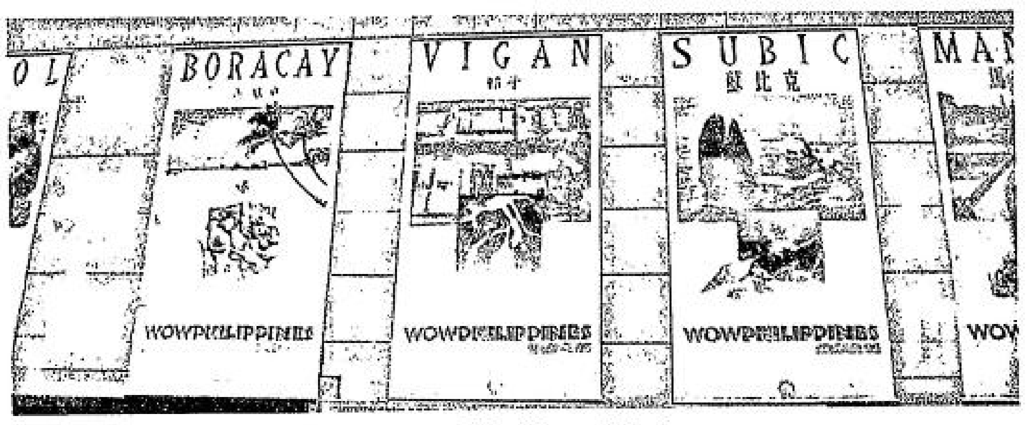
Buoyed by the Taiwanese market performance, the tourism department participated recently in the Taipei International Travel Fair (TITF), promoting beach holidays, health and wellness programs and other tour packages for winter and Chinese New Year.

"Through our aggressive marketing approach, Philippine tourism hopes to reach the five-million tourist benchmark by 2010," said Durano.

The Philippines is preparing for this anticipated increase in international arrivals by increasing flight capacity and enhancing regional connections with the opening of the new international airport in Manila, and expansion of major domestic airports.



AT THE Taipei International Travel Fair (TITF), Philippine delegates promoted beach holidays, health and wellness programs and other tour packages for the winter and Chinese New Year seasons.



"WOW Philippines", tarpaulin banners at Taipei Central Station

Taipei Travel Fair

At the TITF held at the sprawling Taipei World Trade Center, the Philippine booth, looking like a nipa hut adorned with banana leaves, palm trees and various foliage, was one of the most visited exhibits. The award-winning Bayanihan Cultural Dance Company performed traditional dances in colorful costumes.

Durano, in his brief stay in Taipei, visited Taipei City Mall and MRT Central Basement Shop where "Wow Philippines" billboards and posters in English and Chinese were strategically placed. He visited the Chiang Kai Shek Memorial, having his photo taken beside the "Wow Philippines" bus.

The secretary was accompanied by Romulo Manlapig, Meco deputy resident representative for business development; Rica Bueno, head of Asia-Pacific marketing team for tourism; Panga and the celebrity endorsers.

Local travel groups that participated in the fair included Pearl Farm Beach Resort, Patio Pacific Boracay, El Nido Resorts, Boracay Regency and Dos Palmas Resort.

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

630
WOW PHILIPPINES

"WOW Philippines" bus does its promotional job loud and clear.

TRAVELBRIEFS

Christmas at 30,000 feet

EXPERIENCE in-flight Christmas, Singapore Airlines-style. For the whole month of December, KrisWorld, SIA's in-flight entertainment system, will feature festive treats and surprises. The Tweenies, Hi-5 and Barney will lead the kids in caroling on the audiowaves. Vocalists Hayley Westenra, Katie Melua and Katherine Jenkins will keep adults entertained with Christmas tunes and memories. SIA aircraft fitted with the Wisemen3000 system will feature hit movies with holiday themes like "Christmas with the Kranks" and "The Polar Express," as well as the classic "Christmas in Connecticut" (1945). Jamie Oliver will share his culinary secrets in creating an unforgettable Christmas meal in "Oliver's Twist" on the Learning channel. People flying on the 24th or 25th of December can expect to enjoy yuletide must-haves like roast turkey with chestnut stuffing, turkey and ham with herbed bread stuffing and roast gravy, mince pie and warm Christmas pudding.

Winter in HK

THE HONG Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) is staging the Hong Kong WinterFest for the fourth consecutive year. Ongoing until Jan. 2, 2006, it features an even larger Santa's Town, more festive programs and activities, and greater industry participation. This year, Santa's Town in Central extends beyond Statue Square into Chater Garden during weekends and public holidays. Focal points are Snowy Chapel and a two-story-high Santa's Clock Tower. The HKTB will produce a Hong Kong WinterFest Passport to Special Offers highlighting offers by merchants accredited under the Quality Tourism Services scheme.

Three-plus-one Christmas package

A GRAND Christmas celebration with friends and family is made more memorable when spent at Discovery Suites. Listed as one of 2003's "Best Employers in Asia" by Hewitt Asia, Discovery Suites offers the Christmas Three package. Spend two full nights with your family and get the chance to relive these memories with a gift certificate for a free night, yours to redeem anytime. The Holiday getaway package offers your choice of room such as the Junior Suite at only P7,500+ and the One Bedroom Suite for only P9,000+.

Your stay comes with daily breakfast offerings at the Serendipity Lounge for two persons, a welcome gift, complimentary Urban Tykes Christmas goodies for children 8 years old and below, a 20-percent off from Discovery Spa, 10-percent discount on holiday buffets at Café Berrio, and shopping discounts at the nearby Podium. Promo runs Dec. 10-Jan. 8, 2006, except on Dec. 31, valid for local residents. Call 6352222.

Barney and friends

HAVE a merry Christmas with the "Barney and Friends" room package of Holiday Inn Galleria Manila.

Enjoy a family holiday getaway for only P7,000+, inclusive of Deluxe room accommodation with buffet breakfast at the Raphael Café for parents and kids 10 years and below. Guests are also entitled to four entry passes to the "Barney and Friends" show at the Araneta Coliseum (matinee or evening shows until Dec. 22).

"Barney and Friends" room package is available until Dec. 22 exclusively for local and foreign residents of the Philippines. Rate is subject to VAT, applicable local tax and 10 percent service charge. Call 6337111 local 7416/7440, fax 6332824 or e-mail reservation@holiday-inn.galleria-mla.com.

Special Christmas package

PUNTA de Fabian located in Barangay Evangelista, Baras Rizal, only a 90-minute drive from Ortigas Center, offers a special Christmas party package including a choice of set or buffet meals for a minimum of 100 and maximum of 250 pax.

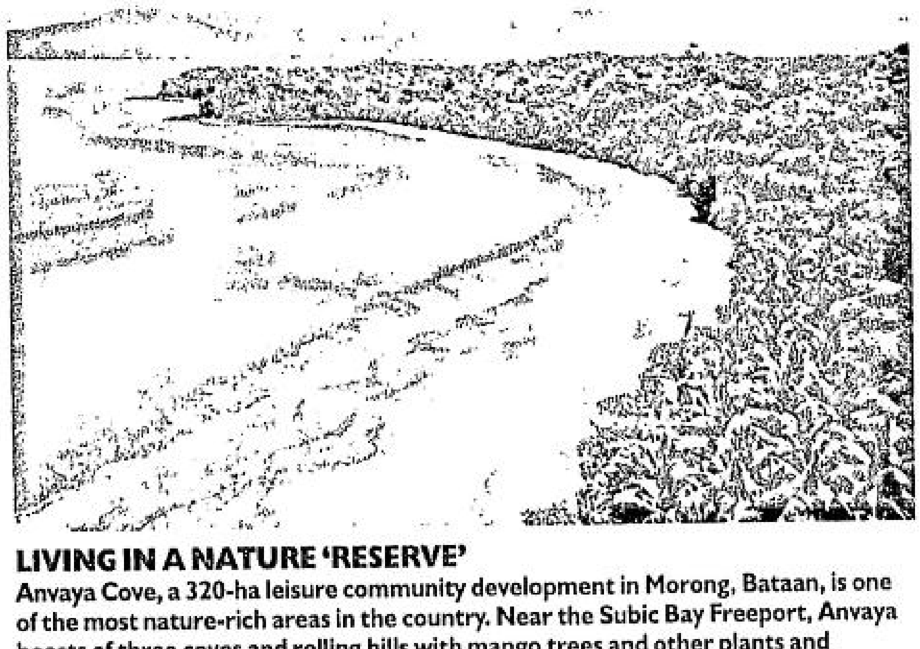
The package also includes five hours use of function room, buffet table with centerpiece, elegant skirting, flower centerpiece and candle per table, chairs and tables, one round of iced tea and sound system with podium.

Complimentary use of swimming pool, waved corkage for the first two bottles, menu label, guestbook with pen, announcement poster and gift certificates for a minimum of P60,000 revenue also complete the package. Call the Manila Sales Office at (632) 4263260 or 9272643.

Preferred airline

KOREAN national carrier Asiana Airlines (OZ) has been recognized by Filipino consumers as their preferred airline. The carrier, which has been operating in the Philippines for over 10 years, was named Most Outstanding Airline at the 16th Annual National Consumer Awards. Asiana was also cited for World's Best Cabin Crew by the London-based Skytrax survey of over a million global passengers; and got the Philippine Marketing Excellence Award for Most Outstanding Airline.

Asiana operates in three key points in the country: Manila, Clark and Cebu.



LIVING IN A NATURE 'RESERVE'

Anvaya Cove, a 320-ha leisure community development in Morong, Bataan, is one of the most nature-rich areas in the country. Near the Subic Bay Freeport, Anvaya boasts of three coves and rolling hills with mango trees and other plants and animals. At Anvaya, people can interact freely with nature. Trained staff and professionals will guide guests and residents in exploring the various sea and land ecosystems.

Hiking paths and biking trails wind through Anvaya Cove's rich forests and water systems. Part of Anvaya's main cove is a nesting site for *pawikan*, Philippine sea turtles. Another section hosts migratory mallards or ducks. Anvaya Cove is a development project of Ayala Land Premier. Call 7287000 or 8923333, e-mail anvayacove@ayalaland.com.ph or visit www.anvayacove.com. You may also visit the Makati marketing showroom at Greenbelt 2 Garden, near Italianni's restaurant and Segafredo café.

Ermita church now a shrine

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

ON DEC. 12, FEAST DAY OF OUR Lady of Guadalupe, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales declared Ermita Church the Archdiocesan Shrine of Nuestra Señora de Guia, the oldest Marian image in the Philippines.

At 5:30 p.m. during High Mass, devotees witnessed the dedication of the church, home of the Virgin since it was found in 1571 being venerated by the natives on a bush of *pandan* leaves. A small chapel was built and, afterwards, a bigger church. The Virgin's feast day is May 19.

Fr. Sanny de Claro, parish priest and rector, led 78 other priests in the concelebration of the Mass with Archbishop Rosales as main celebrant.

Tony Adriano designed the main altar in the baroque style. The Virgin was resplendent in her vestments made of Spanish thread from Madrid, Spain. Noli Viridico supervised the enthronement.

Archbishop Rosales called the new shrine "the Mother of all shrines in the Philippines" because the devotion to Nuestra Señora de Guia was the first Marian devotion in the country.

Venerable Matt Talbot

Alcoholics and drug addicts can now pray to Venerable Matt Talbot whose canonization is being studied by the Vatican.

His tomb is in our Lady of Lourdes Church in Sean McDermatt Street, Dublin, Ireland.

For favors received through his intercession, write to Fr. Morgan Costelloe at the above address or e-mail info@matttalbot.com.

Matt Talbot (1856-1925) was born in poverty in Dublin's inner city. He began drinking when he was 12, becoming a chronic alcoholic. After 16 years he decided to "kick the habit." A priest put him on a rehabilitation program that incorporated the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous 50 years before AA was founded.

After a horrendous struggle, he found sobriety through prayer and self-sacrifice. His Higher Power was the Christian God. He remained sober for 40 years until his death in 1925. His life story has been an inspiration for alcoholics and addicts throughout the world.

For prayers, write to me at PO Box 2050, Manila. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

San Lorenzo chapel

Filipinos in New York and other states can now visit the chapel of Lorenzo Ruiz in lower Manhattan (Broome Street). Fr. Erno Diaz announced this during the launch of his book "On the Road with San Lorenzo Ruiz" at the Makati Skyline recently. The Archdiocese of New York dedicated the chapel to San Lorenzo Ruiz.

In his book, Fr. Diaz, who was chaplain of the Philippine Women's University (PWU), said it was a long journey of 25 years after the saint was beatified by Pope John Paul II in Manila in 1981.

Fr. Diaz, who was administrator of the Filipino apostolate in New York in upper Manhattan, said the achievement gave him a sweet spiritual satisfaction.

Former Sen. Helen Benitez congratulated the priest for his tenacity and stubbornness in making the dream come true.

The book, published by University of Sto. Tomas Press, is available at the PWU bookstore and St. Paul's store on Bagtikan Street, Makati. Text Sonia at 0919-3679453.

Augustinian night

The launch of the book "Augustinus, Homo Religiosus" by Dr. Macario M. Ofilada capped the yearlong celebration of the 1650th anniversary of the birth of Saint Augustine, bishop of Hippo and spiritual father of the Augustinians; the 400th anniversary of the construction of the church in Intramuros; and the fifth centennial of the birth of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, founder of Manila.

Guests were Spanish Ambassador Ignacio Sagaz, Archbishop Gaudencio V. Rosales, National Commission for Culture and the Arts chair Ambeth Ocampo, Cecile Guidote and Dr. Javier Galvan of Instituto Cervantes. Alejandro Roces was guest speaker.

The event was supported by Makati Skyline and Imprenta de San Jose. The book is available at San Agustin Museum Shop.

14th anniversary

Healing priest Fr. Diwane Cacao celebrated the 14th anniversary of his ordination and five other classmates in the San Pablo Cathedral with a Mass at the Sancti Dei Healing Center in Los Baños, Laguna. With him was Fr. Luis Tolentino, parish priest of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Los Baños.

Fr. Luis asked the congregation to pray for them so they would remain faithful to their calling. Ordained on the same day were Fr. Louie Montano (St. Martin de Porres Parish, San Pedro), Fr. Mario Rivera (San Vicente Church, Biñan), Fr. Armin Genota (St. John the Baptist Church, Calamba), and Fr. Jude Olazo (San Isidro Parish, Biñan).

Anniversary

The Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice of the University of the Philippines turns 50 on Dec. 20. Parish priest Fr. Arthur Opinian, the Parish Pastoral Council, the UP Student Catholic Action, the AdHoc Committee of the Golden Anniversary and parishioners have prepared various activities to mark the occasion.

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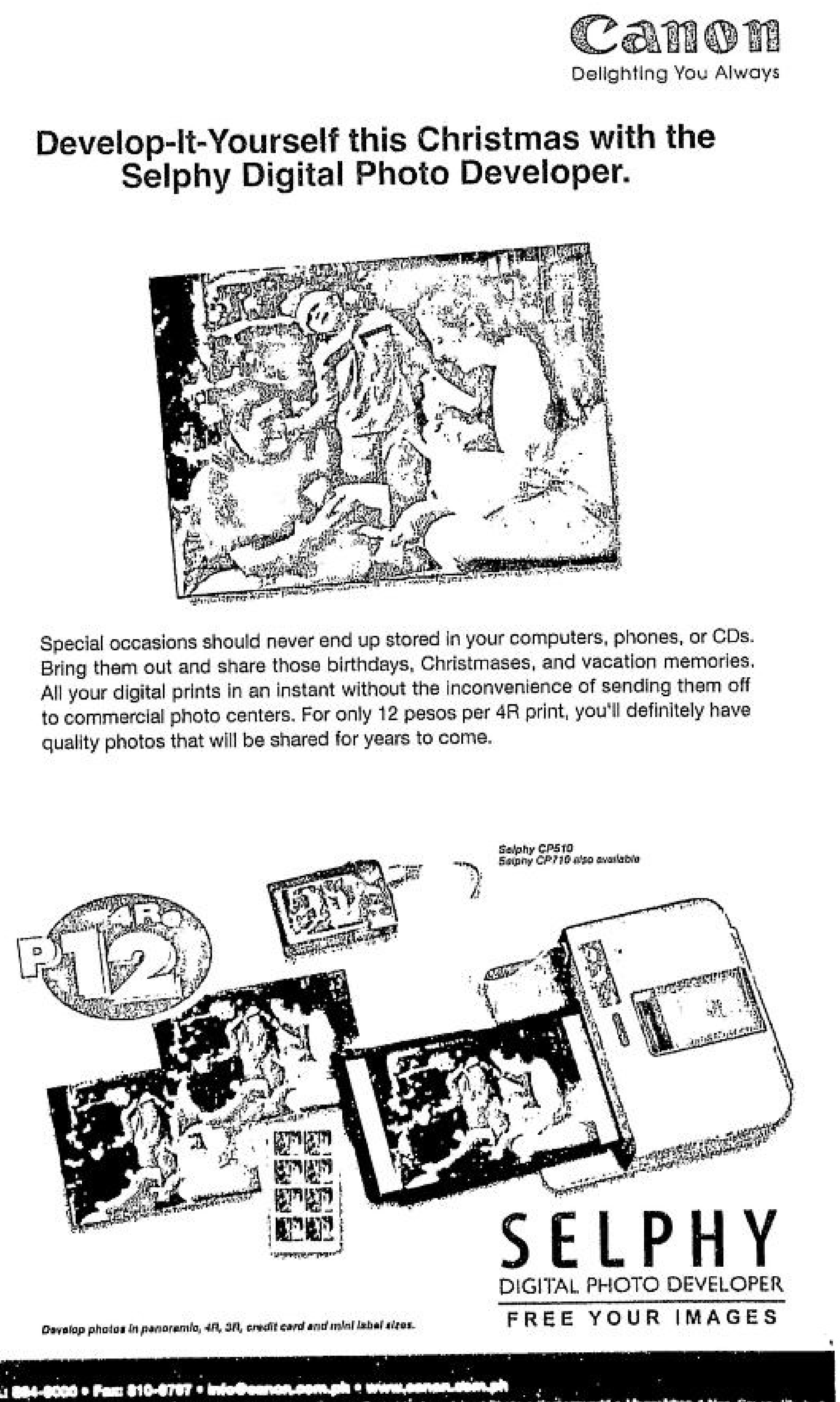
Simply. The way to healthy cooking.

Christmas morning didn't look like this.

Christmas photos



Develop-It-Yourself this Christmas with the Selphy Digital Photo Developer.

Special occasions should never end up stored in your computers, phones, or CDs. Bring them out and share those birthdays, Christmases, and vacation memories. All your digital prints in an instant without the inconvenience of sending them off to commercial photo centers. For only 12 pesos per 4R print, you'll definitely have quality photos that will be shared for years to come.

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A gift that keeps on giving

IRONMAN Dual Tech ladies watch

TIMEX, THROUGH its Philippine distributor New Trends International, has joined hands with the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) to build at least four to six schoolrooms or daycare centers in the poorest parts of the country.

Purchase of any Timex watch worth P2,490 not only lets you have a second watch for only P500, but part of the proceeds will go to Unicef for the school-building project.

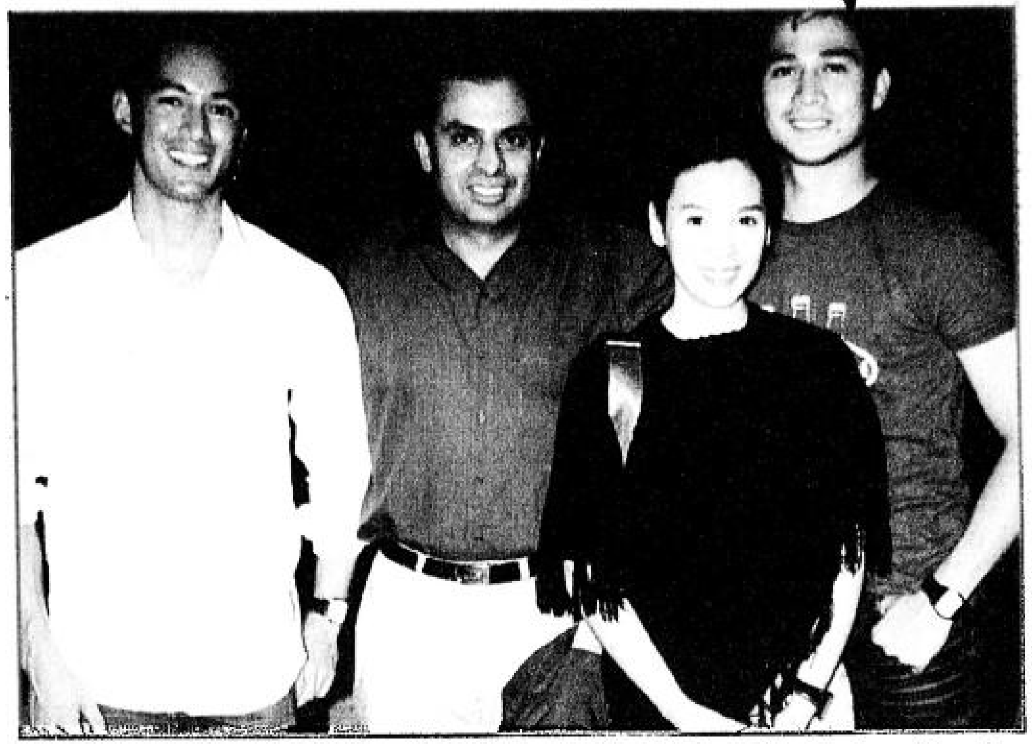
Timex pledged to give at least P2 million for the building of four to six classrooms for a public school, benefiting 4,000 students.

The more watch purchases, the more classrooms will be built.

It is estimated that one in four barangays has no elementary school, depriving 1.6 million children of basic education. A third of the country's barangays do not have complete elementary schools.

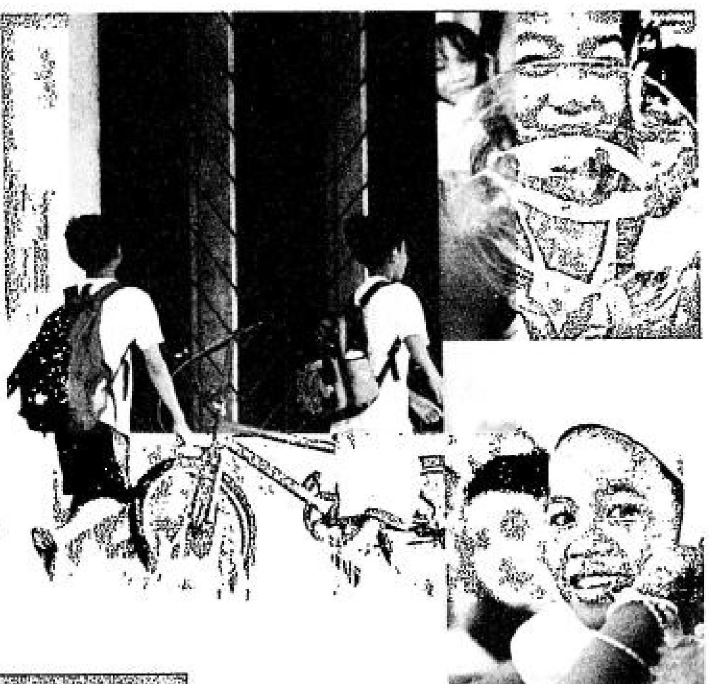
The Department of Education says some 21,000 classrooms and 10,000 teachers are needed for the country's 16 million students in public elementary and high schools.

A Timex watch this Christmas not only means a purchase that will last for a long time but will also help provide a brighter future for children in the poor communities.



ALL eager to give their time to help: Timex endorsers Marc Nelson, Claudine Barretto and Piolo Pascual, with Timex Southeast Asia & Pacific President Kapil Kapoor

IRONMAN Triathlon Shock



IRONMAN Dual Tech men's watch

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~~Reg. Price P22,450-00~~
X-MAS PRICE P14,595

PACKAGE 2
Fernando M-2000R drum outfit (all color)
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~~Reg. Price P22,950-00~~
X-MAS PRICE P15,995

PACKAGE 3
Fernando NS-200L drum outfit (all color)
- Zildjian Planet Z Pro 3 pro pack
- China 110-1C drum stool

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PACKAGE 4
Sonor FSH325 Force 2003
- Zildjian ZXTP4P Pro 4 pro pack
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PACKAGE 5
SONOR
Sonor FSH3005 drumset (all colors)
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Promo period is from December 18 to December 31 of 2005. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 7261, Series of 2005.

Do you experience these SYMPTOMS over and over again?

You may have DYSPEPSIA!

Early Satiety "Madaling mabusog"
Gas "Kabag"
Bloating "Parang tambol ang tiyan"
Nausea "Nasusuka"
Heavy Stomach "Mabigat na tiyan"
Stomach Pain "Masakit na tiyan"

Motilium relieves dyspepsia by restoring proper stomach movement.

Sa Dyspepsia, Domperidone Motilium 10 mg tablet gastrokinetic/antiemetic

Take one 10mg Motilium tablet 30 minutes before eating.

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LIFESTYLE

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Dreaming of a Gold Christmas
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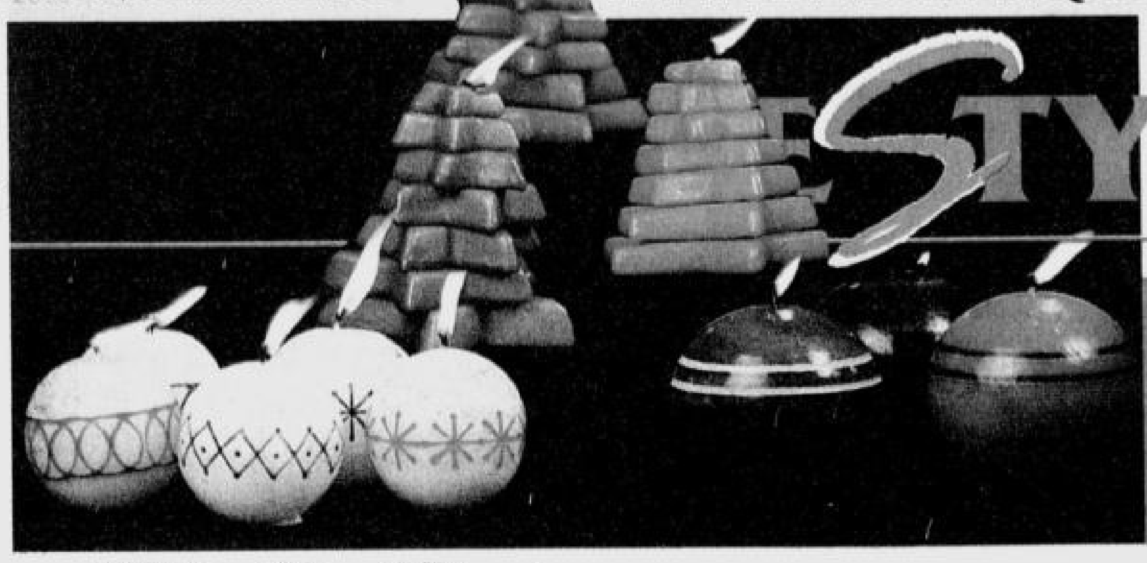


GIVING GIFTS THAT GIVE. Candles (round) made by Kapitbahayan, a group of poor women in Pandacan, and (tree-shaped) by the released prisoners under Pag-asa Sa Paglaya Multipurpose Cooperative (PSP).

Gifts of grace

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Ernie Sarmiento

YOU DON'T HELP another human being by giving him fish, it is said, but by teaching him how to fish. You can, however, extend the help further by finding a market for the fish.

Several years ago, Marge Macasaet-Barro founded Food for the Soul, which markets food products made by nuns, monks and other religious organizations. She and INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, her former classmate at the Asian Institute of Management, would later expand this same concept to create what is now known as Gifts and Graces Fair Trade Foundation Inc. (GGFTFI).

Gifts and Graces was set up not to provide direct financial help to nongovernment organizations but to assist them in gaining market access to sell and promote their livelihood projects. By creating awareness of these NGOs' projects, the private sector could patronize them, thus helping alleviate the plight of the poor, the constituency of NGOs.

> The best thing that has happened to NGOs is a new NGO focused on marketing NGO goods

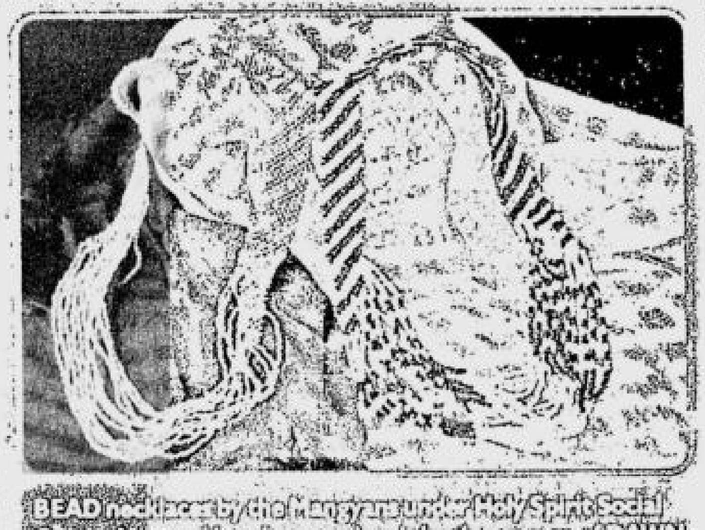
It was the idea of "social entrepreneurship" and fair trade practices that inspired these two women to found GGFTFI, a nonstock, nonprofit organization, early this year.

They found kindred spirits in Vicky Garchitorena, president of Ayala Foundation; Mariles Gustilo, president of Lowe Worldwide Inc.; Chit Juan, president of Figaro Coffee Company; Marivic Limcaoco of Magoo's Pizza and Kawayan Cove; Francisco Bernardo, chair of JAD Group of Companies; and design consultant Carlo Tanseco.

While Gifts and Graces didn't endow additional capital to its initial selection of 11 partner NGOs, says project manager Patricia Lichauco, it did provide assistance in product development. Tanseco was tasked to do the rounds of the 11 NGOs "to help them create better-looking products. This ensured that they can compete in terms of quality" with existing products in the mass market.

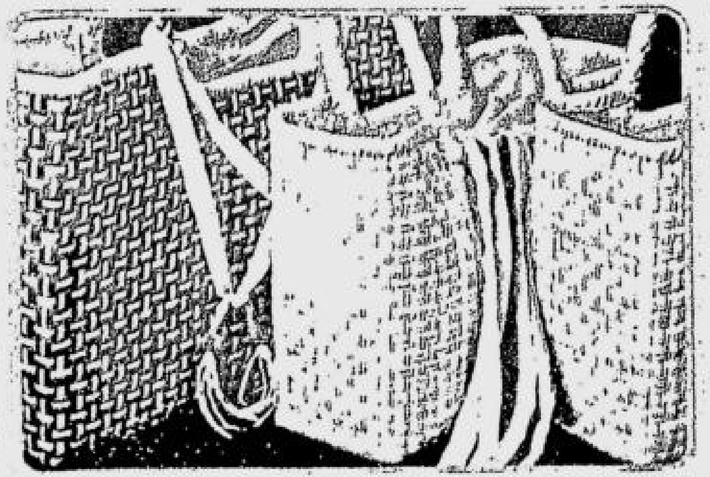
"We're very pleased that Gifts

GIFTS/ G4



BEAD necklaces by the Mangyans under Holy Spirit Social Center Inc., and handwoven shawls by the women of DAWN

WIRE book markers by The Learning Center, crafted by its developmentally challenged wards as part of their therapy



HANDWOVEN bags by the poor women of San Benito, Calatrava, Negros Occidental. Organized under Patamaba, their products used to be sold only in Bacolod and San Carlos.

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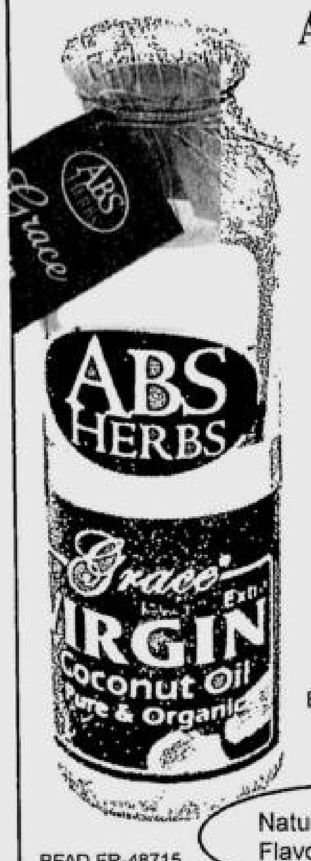
  Tel.: (+632) 897-9123 / Fax: (+632) 897-9107
- Kalayaan Avenue, Quezon City
  Tel.: (+632) 924-2689 / Fax: (+632) 925-3205
- Andalucia St., Sta. Cruz, Manila
  Tel.: (+632) 742-7292 / Fax: (+632) 741-6486

CENTRAL RESERVATIONS OFFICE [illegible]



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Grace
Grace Extra VIRGIN Coconut Oil Pure & Organic

A Perfect Gift Suggestion...
Give good
Health this
Christmas
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Boost Immune System • Improves Digestion
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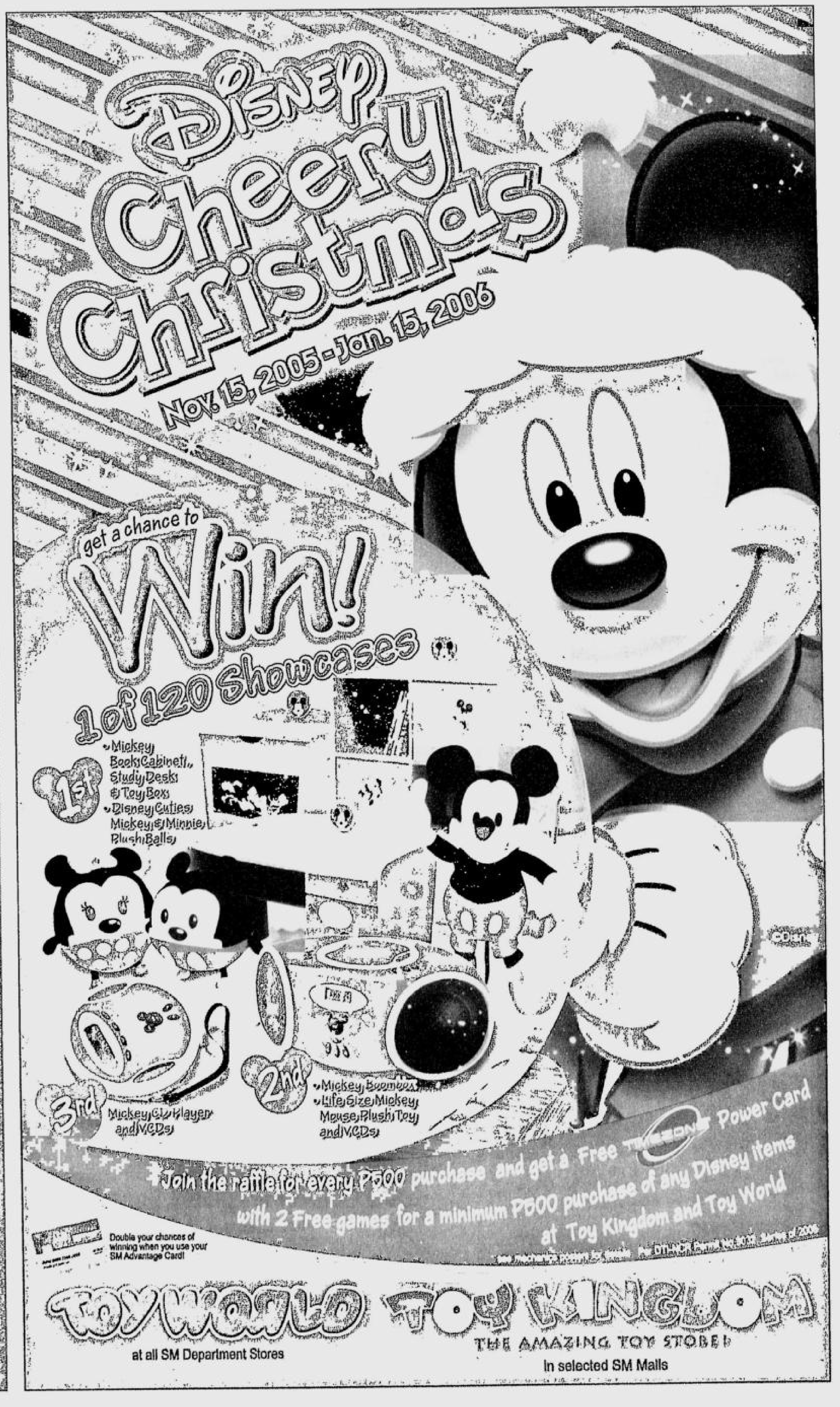


Disney
Cheery Christmas
Nov. 15, 2005 - Jan. 15, 2006
get a chance to Win!
1 of 120 Showcases
1st
• Mickey Book Cabinet, Study Desk & Toy Box
• Disney Cuties Mickey & Minnie Plush Balls
2nd
• Mickey Boombox
• Life Size Mickey Mouse Plush Toy and VCDs
3rd
Mickey CD Player and VCDs
©Disney
Join the raffle for every P500 purchase and get a Free Timezone Power Card with 2 Free games for a minimum P500 purchase of any Disney items at Toy Kingdom and Toy World
Double your chances of winning when you use your SM Advantage Card!
TOY WORLD
at all SM Department Stores
TOY KINGDOM
THE AMAZING TOY STORE!
In selected SM Malls

Contemporary twist to old tradition

OPULENT holiday decor for the bedroom

CELEBRATE THE TRADITION OF Christmas with a contemporary twist at Our Home, the lifestyle store showcasing great designs at affordable prices.

Our Home offers some creative ways of bringing Christmas into your home:

- **Trendy trees.** Try using a spiral tree instead of the usual evergreen variety. These are not only interesting conversation pieces, but are also sleek and graceful, like sculptures.
- **Bejeweled trees.** Add a regal touch to your tree with opulent jewel-like ornaments. Fashioned from faux crystals, some call to mind Russian royalty, others sparkling snowflakes.
- **Dinner dazzle.** Red candleholders dripping with rubies will add an elegant touch to Christmas dinners.
- **Subtle ornamentation.** If you want something other than a tree, try an arrangement of Christmas balls in a vase.
- **Pillow panache.** Silk pillows of all sizes will add character to your sofa.

The collection is available at all Our Home stores at SM Supermalls.

ELEGANTLY designed red candle holder with jewelry stones for a romantic dinner

Floral arrangements for Christmas dinners

CREATE A TABLE setting worthy of your Christmas dinner.

Complement the special occasion with dinnerware, unique yuletide theme, innovative ornaments and a colorful focal point.

The Flower Farm offers customers stunning and beautifully arranged centerpieces for bountiful dinner tables. The centerpieces come in different designs, each bearing The Flower Farm's trademark unique and surprising combinations of Christmas fruits, fresh foliage, seeds, candles, gold and glitter.

The Flower Farm Christmas centerpieces are sure to enhance the holiday dining experience and capture not only the guests' attention but also the spirit of the season.

Call 8156667 (Makati Central Business District), 8094609 (Alabang Town Center) and 7227122 (Madison Square, Greenhills).

HOLIDAY centerpiece made of fruit, *agoho* seeds with gold glitter, a candle and fresh foliage (P1,210) from Flower Farm

TYPE S Auto dress up kit (P1,200), Autosport auto ionizer (P440) and air compressor (P464)

BOSH IXO cordless screwdriver (P1,795.50) or Black & Decker compact screwdriver (P1,899.75, comes with a free 7.5-m measuring tape)

Practical gift ideas

HANDYMAN DO IT BEST HOME Center (Handyman) offers Great Holiday Gifts.

Décor Delights shares holiday decorating ideas using affordable things.

For gifts, there are the Bosch's IXO cordless screwdriver or Black & Decker's compact screwdriver (which comes with a free 7.5-m measuring tape). Types' auto dress-up kit, Skil's Heat gun, Circular saw, or Autosport's Air compressor and auto ionizer are also sensible options.

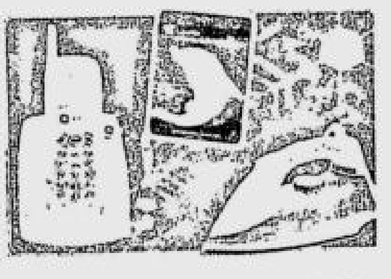
Household gifts include microwave oven or steam iron from Black & Decker, cordless phone from GE or a Philip's Rice cooker. Get four Gartim Night Lights for the price of three. Discounts are available until Dec. 31.

Start-up Handy Kit consists of hammer, measuring tape and pliers while the Emergency Kit includes jumper cables, emergency lamps, pressurized can of tire inflator to address road emergencies.

From Handyman's Car Care Gizmos, you can get sponge, chamois, car shampoo and wax, buffing cloth, tire protectant and freshener for the car enthusiast. The Jazz-up-your-car Kit includes seatbelts straps, steering wheel covers and drink-mobile phone-sunglass holders. Garden lovers may welcome Treasures for the Green Thumb.

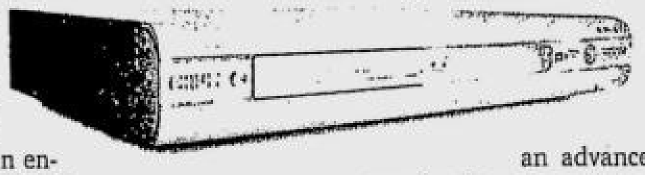
Get these items at Handyman until Dec. 31 and put them in a clear toolbox, available at 20-percent off for every P500 single receipt purchase.

Handyman Do It Center are at Robinsons Place Pioneer, Robinsons Starmills Pampanga and Robinsons Place Novaliches. Handyman Do It Best Home Center branches are in all Robinsons malls, Waltermart malls, Festival Mall and other leading shopping centers nationwide.


GE CORDLESS (P1,596), Black & Decker steam iron (P1,525.50). Buy three Gartim Night Lights and get one more free.

Perfect for movie marathons

'TIS THE SEASON FOR MARATHON viewing of old Christmas movies or specials. The new Philips DVDR520H recorder, made by Europe's No. 1 consumer electronics company, is the latest and most advanced DVD recorder available in the market today. Not only does it support all known disc formats including DVD, DVD_R/RW, VCD, SVCD, CD, MP3-CD, CD-R and CD-RW, it can record and store an entire library of DVD-quality audio-video content right into its drive.



It can handle a minimum of 16 hours to a maximum of over 960 hours' recording time, depending on the mode that you choose. And it can record from a variety of sources: TV, cable jacks, S-Video or DV camcorder.

The Philips DVDR520H is so versatile it actually allows you to perform multiple tasks at your convenience via its unique Flex Time feature, which makes it possible to pause and replay live shows anytime while it continues recording. With the Philips DVDR520H you can relive historic moments without missing a beat.

It also has an advanced editing system that lets you review and remove unnecessary scenes fast and easy. With its superb iLink connectivity, creating and sharing videos or picture CDs in JPEG format can be achieved effortlessly.

Visit www.philips.com/newscenter

Where making a list is easy

HERE ARE SOME CHRISTMAS GIFT SUGGESTIONS from Rustan's, the store that carries international brands of all kinds of products.

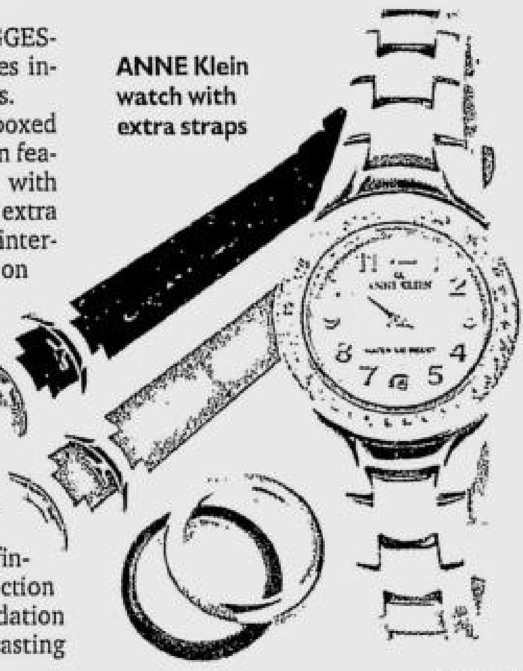
Anne Klein watches are available as boxed gift sets. Shown here is a boxed collection featuring a classic metal bracelet watch with Swarovksi-laden bezel, plus two to four extra straps and bezels that can be used interchangeably with the watch depending on her mood, style and taste. Anne Klein watches are exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp. (tel. 8909703).

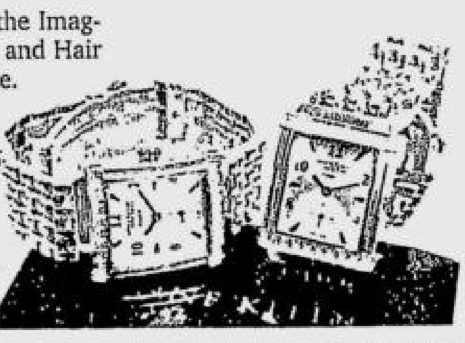
Tefal has practical products for the home like the Aqua Speed iron, Vitaly range of cast-aluminum pans for stir-frying and grilling, and the tabletop electric Fit n' Clean Griller.

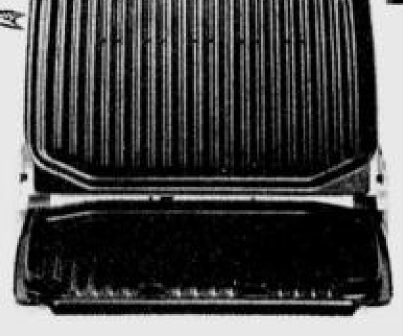
The **Max Factor** line—including Facefinity Compact Foundation, Colour Perfection Lipstick, and Colour Adapt Liquid Foundation and Pressed Powder—provides long lasting color and convenience.

Rowentas small appliances, like the Imagin' Styling Ace, Lissima straightener and Hair Protect, offer quality and convenience.

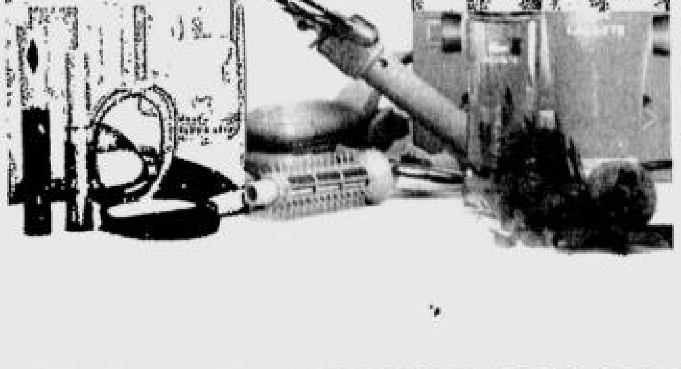
The **Lacoste** Touch of Pink Gift Set includes Eau de Toilette Spray and Body Lotion.

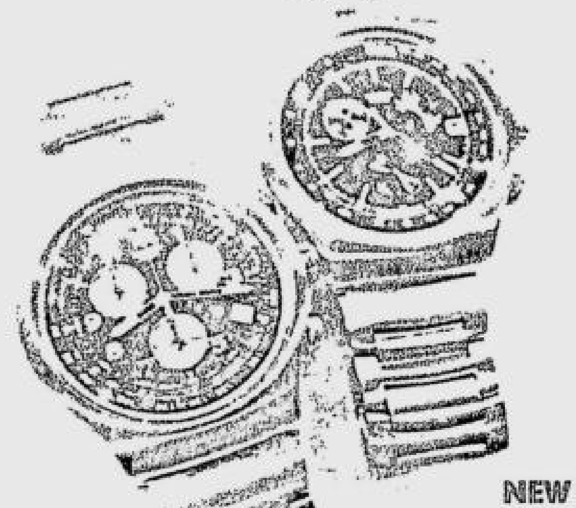

ANNE Klein watch with extra straps

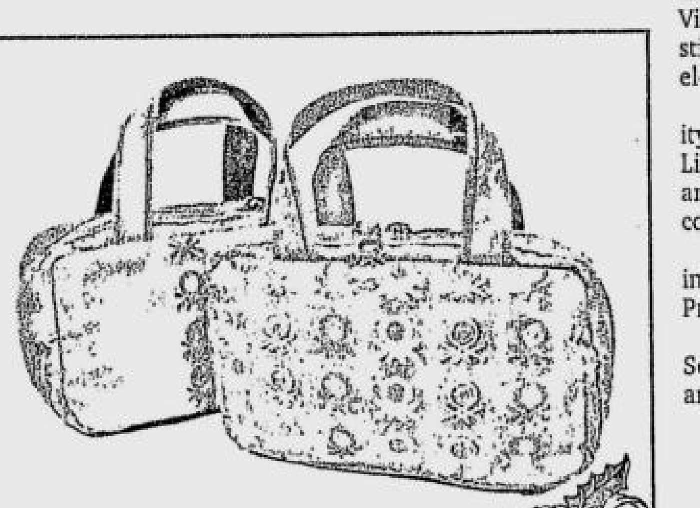

MADE for mom: Anne Klein New York Goldtone Watch with Diamonds, Anne Klein New York Silvertone Watch with Diamonds


GIVE dad some sizzling holiday fun this frosty season: Tefal Fit n' Clean Griller

TEFAL
Vitaly
THE PERFECT collection for your practical aunt during the hectic holidays: Tefal Aqua Speed, Rowenta Hair Protect, Tefal Vitaly Fish Grill


GIVE your sister some holiday pampering with these gifts: Max Factor Lash Lift, Max Factor Silk Gloss Sheer Frost, Max Factor Colour Adapt Pressed Powder, Max Factor Adapt Liquid Foundation, Rowenta Imagine Styling Ace, Lacoste Touch of Pink Gift Set (EDP Spray 90ml. + Body Lotion 150ml.)



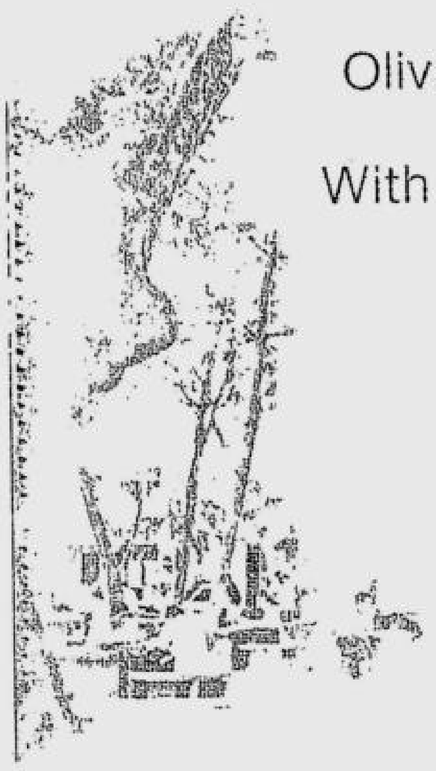


NEW FOR CHRISTMAS AT GIFT GATE

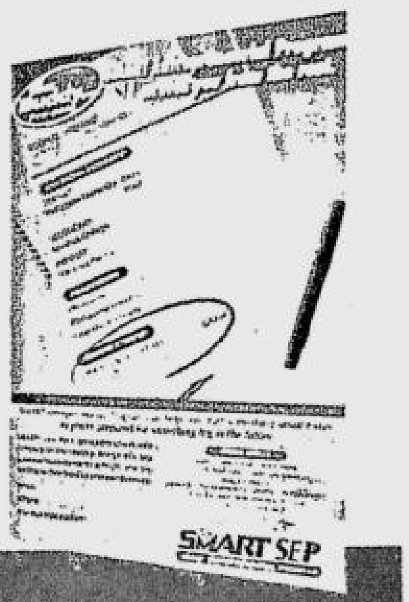
No need to go store-hopping if you shop at Gift Gate, where until Dec. 18, you can avail of 10-percent discount store-wide if you're a Globe user. Just arrived presents perfect are the new collection of Swatch Irony, irresistible Hello Kitty cell-phone jewel charms and mirrors, huggable plush toys of all sizes, chic furry bags with metallic highlights and the cutest United Colors of Benetton purses. Gift Gate is located at all major malls.

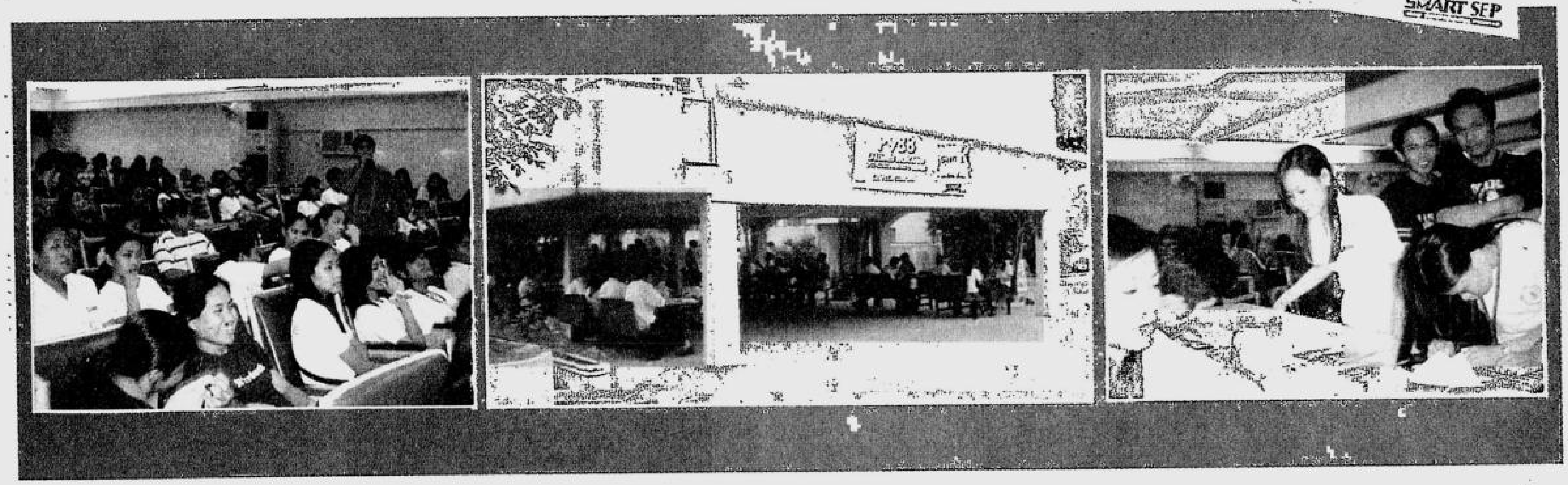
Hello Kitty
Hello Kitty

SEP: Continuing to Shape Future Entrepreneurs



Olivarez College in Parañaque boasts of state-of-the-art facilities.
With complete amenities, they cater to student needs in education.
Their recent tie-up with SMART has provided
both the school and its population
with opportunities in marketing and business.
A perfect example is the recently concluded
SMART Entrepreneurial Program.



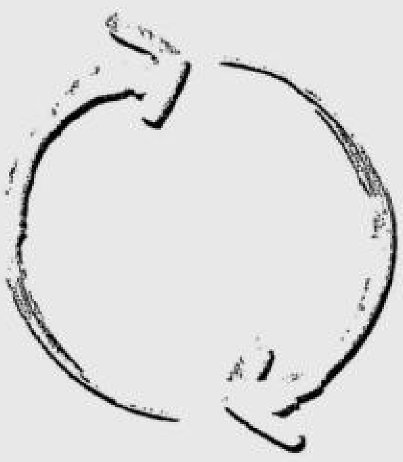


SEP has been touring the country, visiting various institutions to spread the news that there is an alternative to the lack of employment plaguing the country today. At Olivarez College, SEP introduced entrepreneurship prospects to more than 200 students. For Ms. Marilyn T. Allanigue, Head of the Marketing and Public Relations Department, SEP helps students financially in need.

Julius Anthony R. Austria is a senior in Marketing. Just last August he became a SMART Student Buddy. Since then, he has become an inspiration to his friends who want to start their own business as well. Dedicated, hard-working, and responsible, Ms. Marilyn describes Julius as a "brilliant" student.

Through SEP, these young Olivarians are given a chance to build confidence. They are proud to have the support of SMART and continue to actively pursue their dreams of making it big, one day.

It's not just about the innovations we bring...



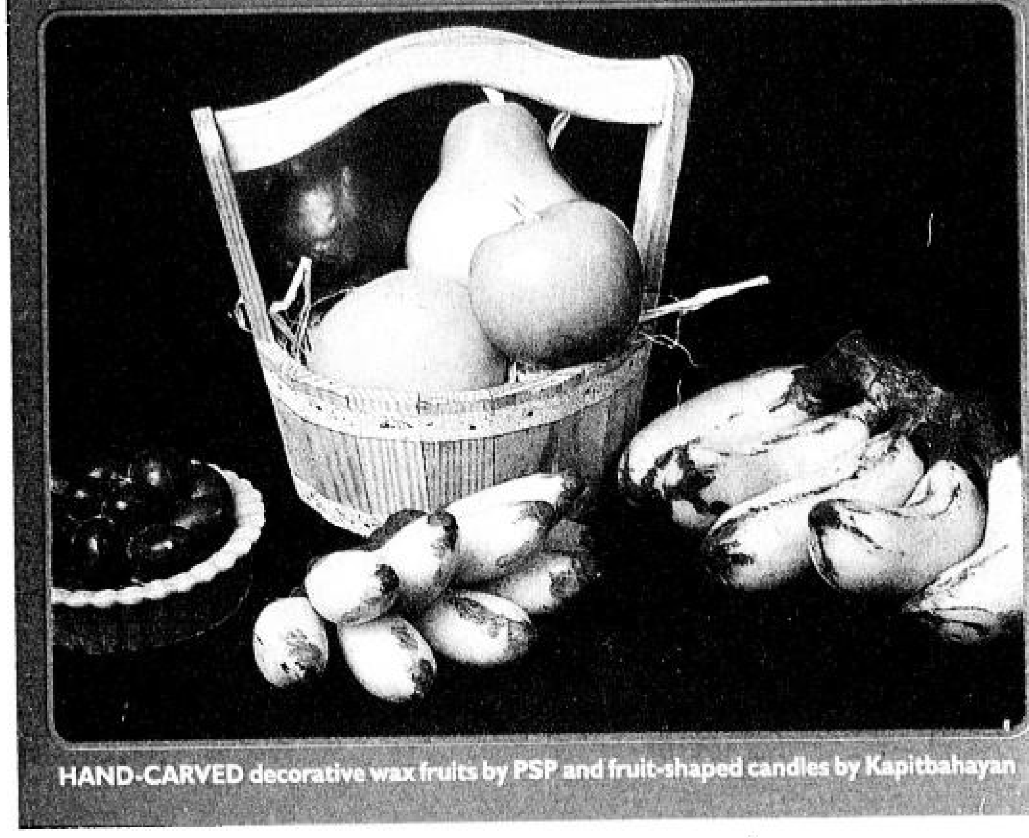
It's about the opportunities we provide.

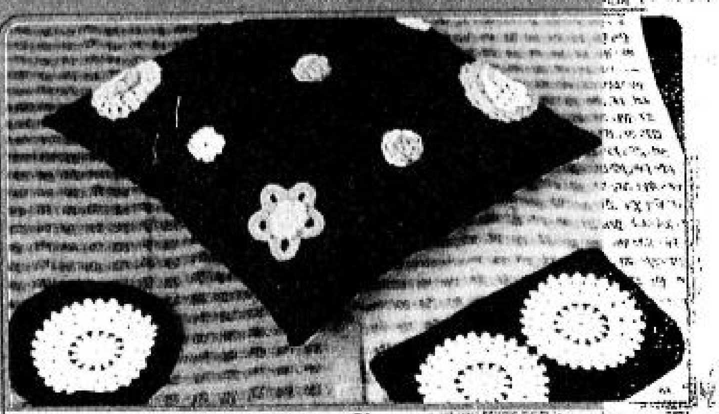
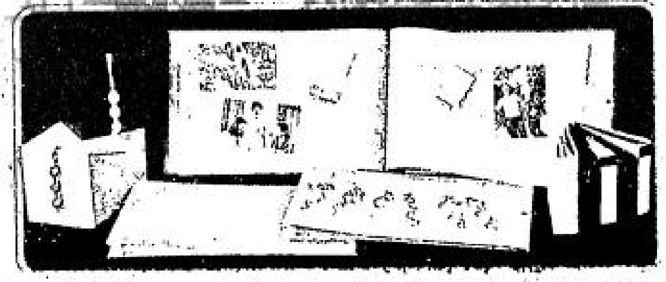
SMART
Simply Amazing!

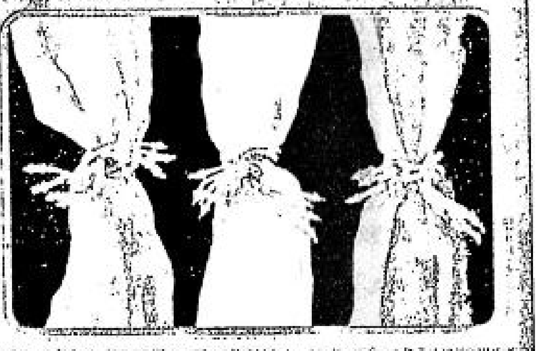
Manny on Entrepreneurship

"The challenge for business today, and in the coming years, should by now be obvious: to create corporate cultures that encourage and reward integrity as much as vigorous entrepreneurship."

--Manuel V. Pangilinan
PLDT and SMART Chairman


HAND-CARVED decorative wax fruits by PSP and fruit-shaped candles by Kapitbahayan



COIN purse, throw pillowcase and makeup bag with crocheted accents by FCED; shawls by DAWN (above). CD boxes, CD ring binders and scrapbooks by Kaakbay Entrework Cooperative (below)

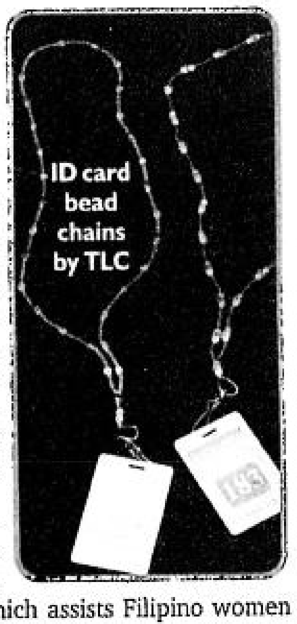

FCED'S wine-glass bead charms (above) and crocheted bead napkin rings (below) made by the poor folk of Paco and Pandacan

Gifts of grace

From page G1

and Graces came in," says Sr. Cho Borromeo of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in Pandacan, Manila. The FMM nuns had been helping the poor women of Pandacan through a livelihood project called Kapitbahayan. The Kapitbahayan women had been making scented candles, their sales relying mostly on a few individual orders.

"We had been hard-up of late because we can't keep up with competition, which are [cheap] candles imported from China," laments Borromeo. "We would like to help more women in the community, but how can we [increase our workforce and production] when we don't have a market? We're happy that we got the order from Gifts and Graces."


ID card bead chains by TLC

Gifts and Graces also promotes the bead crafts of the Learning Center (TLC), a special-education center; soaps, rosaries and candles from Pangarap Shelter for Street Children; handwoven shawls from Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), which assists Filipino women working in Japan; handmade paper products from Hardin ng Kalikasan Women's Multipurpose Cooperative in Quezon; Mangyan bead accessories from Holy Spirit Social Center Inc.; candles made by ex-convicts from Pag-Asa Sa Paglaya Multipurpose Cooperative; woven mats and bags from Negros Occidental by the Pambansang Kalipunan ng mga Mangagawang Impormal sa Pilipinas (Patamaba); and other handmade items from Kaakbay Entrework Cooperative, Alay Kapwa Kristyanong Komunidad Inc. and Families and Children for Empowerment and Development Foundation Inc. (FCED).

Gifts and Graces has also taken the task of packaging and gift-wrapping the products to make them more visually appealing.

The foundation aims to put up mobile kiosks in busy areas to showcase the products of the NGOs. Soon it will come out with a catalog of all the products. It also plans to market online. Its initial sales for the holiday gift-giving came from several corporate and private bulk orders.

"Our goal is, first, to make people aware of these NGOs and what they have been doing to help the community," Lichauco notes. "The selling part will come later… We want people to know that when they buy these products, even in a small way they're helping make better the lives of others.

"Gifts and Graces hopes to help create a sustainable livelihood for these people so that, eventually, we can let them go and do the same for other NGOs."

Call Gifts and Graces at 0906-3022668
E-mail cmoral@inquirer.com.ph

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

C	M	O	N	■	H	A	Z	E	■	■	N	A	Y	■	O	S	A	G	I	■
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Enjoy the magic of
Hong Kong Disneyland with Visa.

HONG KONG
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Visa Hong Kong Disneyland Getaway

Have a magical vacation in Hong Kong Disneyland the Visa way -- get a chance to win a round trip for a family of 4 to Hong Kong Disneyland. Plus enjoy breakfast with your favorite Disney characters, and receive 2 FASTPASS tickets per guest (8 for a family of 4) for line reservations in selected rides and shows.

Be mesmerized and dazzled with the 4 magical worlds of Hong Kong Disneyland. Experience what it was like in the turn of the 20th Century in **Main Street, USA**. Be intrigued at the mysterious jungle of **Adventureland**. Meet Mickey and all his friends in **Fantasyland** and blast into outer space at futuristic **Tomorrowland**! Timeless tales and bold adventures are brought magically to life for children of all ages.

Mechanics:

1. Promo Period: 27 November 2005 to 24 January 2006.
2. Minimum of P500 single-receipt Visa purchase will allow Visa cardholder to register his/her Visa transaction for a chance to win one (1) of seven (7) Family of Four packages to Hong Kong Disneyland on March 2-4, 2006. PLUS HK$5,000 pocket money*.

How to join?

Register your Visa transactions at any of the following available channels:

1.

SMS. Text Visa for details. P2.50 per text will be charged.	Globe - 2361 Smart - 325 Visa <name as it appears on card,address,issuing bank,last 4 digit,amount of transaction,date of transaction,time of transaction> and send to the corresponding access number of your mobile network. (Note that there are no spaces after each comma. Please do not use commas for amounts more than P999.99, and when entering the address.) Ex. Visa MENNIE SO,24/F 6750 AYALA AVENUE MAKATI CITY,AIG,1234,1000.25,112705,1808

2. Call Center: Metro Manila - 637 2768, Provincial - Toll Free # 1800-1888-2591

3. Website: www.hblmasia.com/visa

Disney VISA

*Per family of four
See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3082, Series of 2005

INQUIRER
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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2005
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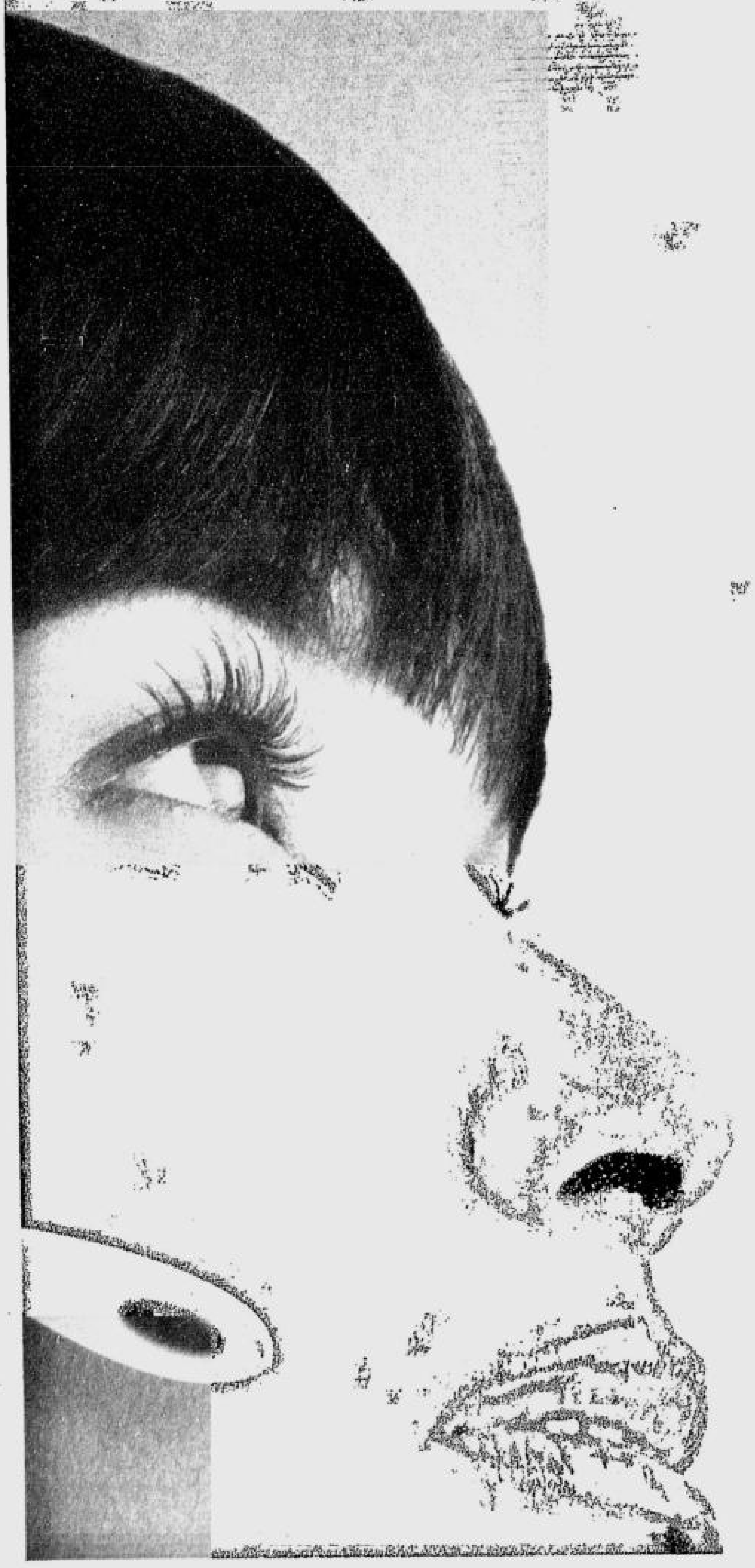
Horizons not borders.

Solutions not differences.
Challenges not barriers.

Grasp opportunities, seek new possibilities and extend your line of sight.

Contact us.



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Bring a 2x2 photo together with your resume. Hired applicants for the month of December shall be receiving a cash bonus on top of regular compensation. Celebrate the holidays with Convergys!

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LOOKING FOR AN EXCITING CAREER IN THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY?

Schlumberger, a leading oilfield service company is now hiring for the following positions:

- Electronic Instrument Technician with maintenance experience on Advanced Electronic devices and systems which involve complex Mechanical, Electrical, Electronic, Electromagnetic, Hydraulic, Radiation and Ultrasonic sensors.
- Mechanic Maintenance Technician with maintenance experience on Automotive engines, Air-Conditioning, pneumatic systems, compressors and be able to troubleshoot basic Electronic/Electrical Control systems.
- Hydraulic Maintenance Technician with maintenance experience on Advanced Mechanical equipment involving hydraulic systems.

- We offer:
  - Competitive Salaries and Excellent Benefits
  - Career advancement through a Learning Management System

- Qualified candidates must satisfy the following:
  - Diploma / Certificate / Degree holder in Electronic or Mechanical Engineering
  - Minimum experience of 2 years and strong troubleshooting skills
  - Pass a medical exam/background check
  - Willing to work in any Middle East country (Qatar, UAE, Yemen, Oman)
  - Good communication in English (verbal and written)
  - Able to work long hours and flexible work schedule
  - Possess good knowledge of computer system/hardware/software

For applicants who fit the above requirements, please send your CV with picture by email to rewgtmsdm@slb.com. Only e-mail applications will be reviewed. Tests/interviews for qualified candidates will be conducted on the 13th to 16th of-Jan-2006 in Manila.

Your Career Choice Today Is Your Track Record Tomorrow.

Plant your seeds well.

Be part of our handpicked **pioneering team** and **make your mark** in the BPO/call center industry.

Customer Service Representative (Outbound)

- Bachelor's Degree graduate in any field
- At least six (6) months sales/telemarketing experience
- Excellent entrepreneurial skills and thrives in a quota-driven working environment
- Experience in lead generation, B2C campaigns and maintaining US-based clients a plus
- Full-time and part-time positions available

Customer Service Representative (Technical)

- Bachelor's Degree graduate, preferably in Computer Science, Computer Engineering and other related courses
- At least six (6) months working experience as a Technical Support Agent
- Basic technical troubleshooting know-how
- Strong diagnostic and problem solving skills

Training Supervisor

- Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Science, Psychology or any other related disciplines
- Post-graduate degree/units a plus
- At least three (3) years experience in English Language and Accent Training, Sales Training and Product-specific Training Programs
- Expert know-how in adult learning theories and demonstrated ability in all phases of program development life cycle
- Excellent English communication skills both oral and written
- Strong people and critical thinking skills
- Highly creative, dynamic and results-oriented
- Open to graveyard and shifting schedules

Bi-Lingual: English/Korean Customer Service Representative (Inbound)

- Bachelor's Degree graduate in any field
- Proficient in spoken Korean
- Strong empathizing and problem solving skills
- Highly trainable fresh graduates are encouraged to apply
- Experience in a call center/BPO environment an advantage

All **CSR** positions require excellent **English communication skills** with a **neutral accent**, strong **customer orientation**, well-developed **critical thinking skills**, **computer and internet** proficiency. Interested candidates should be **assertive**, a **self-starter**, **dynamic**, **results-driven**, **energetic** and are open to working in **graveyard** and **shifting schedules**.

Finance Assistant

- Bachelor's Degree in Accountancy or Finance
- CPA preferred but not required
- At least one (1) solid year background in General Accounting including AR/AP, bookkeeping, etc
- Financial analysis and budgetary skills covering all facets of FS preparation
- Familiarity with sundry government and taxation requirements
- Very good people and communication skills
- Highly analytical, detail-oriented, results-driven, fast learner, and a team player
- Exposure in using Accounting-based software a plus

Other Open Positions

Executive Assistant
Receptionist
OD Supervisor
Team Leader
Shift Manager
Workforce Supervisor
QA Supervisor

WinSource
SOLUTIONS

Send your updated resume with recent picture at the following email addresses:

winsource001@gmail.com
(for CSR posts);
mycareer@winsourcesolutions.com
(for Support and other posts)
State Position Applied in the Subject Heading

or visit us at **14/F Robinsons Cybergate Center Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City** from 9.30am – 12.00noon ¤ Mondays – Fridays for Testing ¤ +63.2.667.3838

CATHAY PACIFIC

Cathay Pacific Airways, Ltd.
Is in immediate need of an

ASSISTANT MANAGER – MARKETING

Qualifications:

- Graduate of a 4-year college degree, preferably in Communication Arts, Marketing or Management course
- 3-5 years of supervisory/managerial experience gained from leading brands in the service industry
- Excellent communication skills (oral and written)
  Effective planning and problem solving skills. Good time management.
- Marketing background, with established business network among top brands in the market
- Established media relations and preferably with PR experience
- Assertive and has good negotiation skills. Capable to lead a team.
- Hardworking, resourceful and quality conscious. Creative and enthusiastic to learn and contribute.

Interested Applicants may submit their comprehensive resume with passport size photo by email addressed to The Personnel Manager, email address MNLELZ@cathaypacific.com. Please indicate **ASST MANAGER-MKTG vacancy** as the subject/title of the email on or before 23 December2005.

URGENTLY NEEDED!!!

FASHION DESIGNER

- 20-35 years of age
- must have experience in Fashion Design
- fluent in English (knowledge in Chinese language is an advantage)
- creative skills in drawing & sketching
- willing to travel

send or e-mail your resumé at:
1348 SOLER ST. STA. CRUZ, MANILA
nitz08@yahoo.com
or call: 450-3014; 735-2922
look for Ms. Anita Pena

ATTRACTIVE COMPENSATION PACKAGE AWAITS!!!

Oxfam

Oxfam GB's purpose is to work with others to find lasting solutions to poverty and suffering

Oxfam Great Britain's Philippine Programme is offering an employment opportunity for

LOGISTICIAN

Within the context of Oxfam's development philosophy and its programme in the Philippines, to provide logistics support for Oxfam programmes in the Philippines.

Key Responsibilities:

- To organize all logistics processes, including purchasing, warehousing, communications and transport, as well as the related administrative procedures, for Oxfam operations
- To supervise and support logistics personnel working for Oxfam
- To maintain logistic contracts and outsourcing capabilities for the humanitarian programme
- To implement and monitor logistics systems, in accordance with Oxfam GB policies and procedures
- To establish and maintain good contacts with suppliers, government offices, UN agencies and other NGOs with regards to logistical matters
- To report monthly on all logistical activities to the Line Manager
- To assist the Humanitarian Programme Coordinator with logistics advice during the drawing up of new project proposals
- To maintain a preparedness capacity for future emergency operations

Key competencies

- Diplomacy, tact and negotiating skills
- At least 5 years of Logistical Management experience in a development or relief setting
- Team working skills
- Flexibility under pressure and in response to changing needs
- Attention to detail and excellent numeric skills
- Good experience in purchasing, warehousing, vehicle management and administration
- Practical experience in working HF and VHF radios
- Good written and spoken English
- Ability to keep clear and concise records

Desirable competencies

- Financial management ability
- Experience in supervising staff

This is a fixed assignment for six (6) months. Interested applicants should submit application letter and CV to:

The Human Resources and Administrative Officer
OXFAM GREAT BRITAIN
95-A Malumanay Street
Teacher's Village, Diliman, Quezon City 1101
FAX: 927-0499 email: etadeo@oxfam.org.uk

Deadline of application : 04 January 2006

ONLY SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CALLED FOR INTERVIEW

A leading finance Company is expanding and is urgently in need of:

DEALER COORDINATORS *
OFFICE COORDINATORS
CREDIT ANALYSTS

- college graduate preferably Business or Economics
- for Dealer Coodinator* at least 2 years experience in Business/Marketing/Engineering
- pleasing personality
- good oral and written communication skills
- excellent interpersonal skills
- not more than 27 years of age

Submit resumé with 2x2 photo & xerox copy of grades to Tin at

Unit 2702, 27th floor PBCom Tower,
Ayala Avenue, Makati City or email to
tin_brahmall@yahoo.com

ILDAEIL-EDU, INC.

International Education Center

Located in RCBC Plaza, Makati City, we are pioneers in providing cutting-edge service for English as a Second Language to our clients in Korea. We aim for international standards in our programs, and have full-time positions for applicants who are:

- ✓ **Teachers**
- ✓ **Those with the Passion to Teach**
- ✓ **University or Graduate Students**

We offer:

- ✓ **Competitive Compensation**
- ✓ **Subsidized Housing Accommodations for qualified instructors**
- ✓ **Excellent Working Environment**
- ✓ **Professional & Culture-Sensitive Management**

ONLINE ENGLISH INSTRUCTORS

- Teaches English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Accomplishes daily reports, lesson plans, extension lessons and narrative progress reports
- Encourages students to high-level thinking (critical/creative/decision-making)
- Participates in training & curriculum development

Requirements

- Creative, hardworking, results oriented and personable
- A college graduate, preferably Education, English, Literature, Communication Arts
- Well-read, fluent in English
- With an American Accent (an advantage)
- Willing to work from 5am – 2pm OR 2pm – 11pm

Email your resumé to **recruitment.ildaeil@yahoo.com** (text only) or drop off your resumés at the 26th Floor, Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Telephone No. 8451026 http://www.callstudy.co.kr

HIGH PAYING JOBS

HIRING

INT'L FOOD EXPORTER

- FEMALE ACCOUNTING STAFF
- FOOD MERCHANDISER/PURCHASERS EXPD IN EXPORT TRADE
- WAREHOUSE SUPERVISORS
- ENCODERS

COLLEGE GRAD. COMPUTER LITERATE.
FLUENT IN ENGLISH, NOT MORE THAN 35 YEARS OF AGE

Apply: Elsons Enterprises Reliance Center Bldg.
99 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. Bo. Ugong Pasig City
(beside Diamond Motors along C-5)
67199-31-34 Fax No. 671-6294 E-mail: elsons@info.com.ph

AMPHIL BIO CHEMICAL

Exclusive Distributor of MEGA™ Diagnostics, U.S.A.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Item 1: SUB-DISTRIBUTORS for LUZON, VISAYAS, MINDANAO

We are looking for qualified Sub-Distributors of our diagnostic product:

MEGA™ SALMONELLA MICROWELL EIA
THE LATEST DIAGNOSTIC TESTING FOR TYPHOID INFECTION (Salmonellosis)
... closest to the GOLD Standard ...ever!!!

Interested parties may submit Letter of Intent, Registration Documents together with a brief description of distribution network for specific territories of interest.

Item 2: MARKETING REPRESENTATIVE

Qualifications: Must be a Graduate of Medical Technology Course
Marketing Experience required
Very good communication skills

Qualified applicants may submit resumé with supporting documents to:

AMPHIL BIO CHEMICALS, INC.
Suite 708 Richville Corporate Tower
Madrigal Business Park, Ayala Alabang
Muntinlupa City, Philippines
Tel. Nos: 850-1711; 850-1861; Fax: 850-1502

JOB Market
visit us at: www.jobmarketonline.com

THE PERFECT GIFT FOR THE TECHNOPHILE: ELECTRONICS

Start 2006 as part of the Pioneer Team for our New Consumer Electronics Account!

They are one of the leading manufacturers and distributors of electronic entertainment devices. We are IBM. This partnership between two heavy weights spell out growth, stability and promising career prospects for you. So this holiday season, make sure you look for the package wrapped in BLUE!

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IBM DAKSH BUSINESS PROCESS SERVICES PHILIPPINES INC.

Now hiring young, ambitious graduates to fortify the newest IBM network in Southeast Asia!

Customer Care Specialists for Fortune 500 Companies

- Telecommunications (Voice Support)
- Travel (Voice Support)
- Australian Query Management Account (Voice Support)
- Consumer Electronics (Voice Support)
- Consumer Manufacturing Co. (Voice/Email Support)
  - HR back office support (Speaks Thai)
- Digital Imaging Company (Voice Support)
  - HR back office support (Speaks German or French)

Qualifications:

- Graduate of any Bachelor's degree
- Must possess excellent oral and written English communication skills
- Call center experience is an advantage
- Proficient in the use of computers and various applications
- Willing to work in a fast-paced, dynamic, and schedule-shifting environment

Support & Leadership Posts

- Operations Manager
- Team Leaders
- Workforce Managers
- Workforce Specialists
- Quality Assurance Specialists
- Quality Consultant (Speaks Thai)
- Financial Planning Manager
- Treasury Accountant
- Purchasing Assistant
- Data Network Specialists
- System Administrators
- Implementation Manager
- IT Helpdesk
- Technical Support Engineers
- Deputy Manager - Sourcing

Call center experience is a must for support and leadership posts.

You can now visit us at our new Recruitment and Training Center!!

3/F Edsa Central Pavilion Edsa cor. Shaw
Boulevard Mandaluyong City

Mondays to Fridays 9am - 8pm

Call our Recruitment Hotline:
840-6020
or email your resume to:
applications@daksh.com.ph

Bayview Technologies, Inc. is a Philippine-based technology company with interests in online recreation, online gaming, finance, and technology consulting. The principal holding company is based in Hong Kong with offices in Europe and Asia.

Bayview is in urgent need of people to fill in the following positions:

FINANCE MANAGER

Responsibilities:

- Prepares all financial reports, reportorial requirements by parent company, tax returns, and various required statutory reports.
- Provide timely and accurate analysis of budgets, variances, other financial reports and economic trends to assist the CFO and management team in making sound financial decisions.
- Lead the Finance Team in meeting the Company's goals and objectives.
- Act as financial advisor on major contracts into which the company may enter into.

Requirements:

- 7+ years general accounting experience, 3+ years in a managerial position.
- Bachelor's degree in Accounting; must be CPA; MBA is a plus.
- Multi-country & foreign-parent company experience.
- A "working manager" work style with ability to understand details of accounting issues and make appropriate decisions.
- Significant integrated accounting system experience.
- Demonstrated work experience having been both tactical and strategic.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

Requirements:

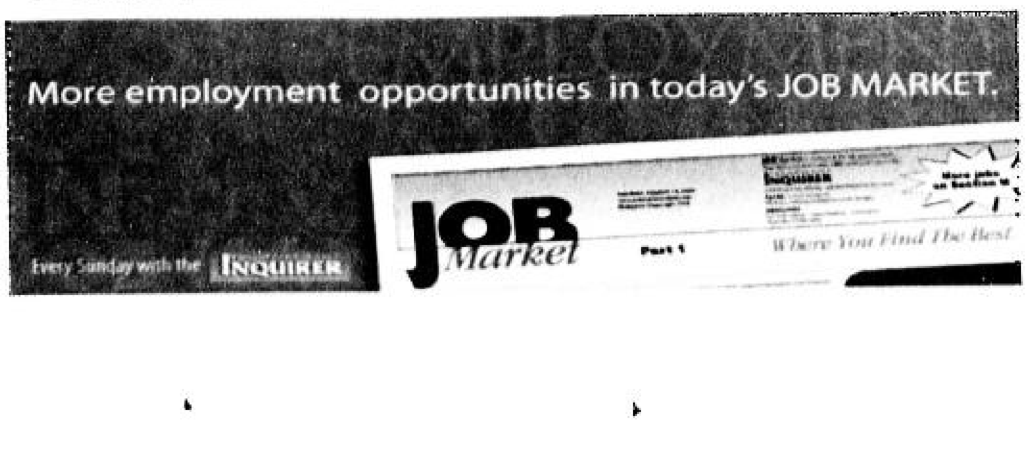
- Candidate must possess at least a Bachelor's/College Degree in Finance/Accountancy/Banking or equivalent.
- Above average communication skills; Required language(s): English & Filipino
- Must be CPA, and with audit background
- At least 5 years of working experience in the related field is required for this position.
- Applicants should be Filipino citizens.
- Computer literate
- Preferably supervisor / 5 yrs & up experienced employees specializing in Finance - General/Cost Accounting or equivalent.
- Will be responsible in general Accounting works and Administrative functions to run the operation on a day to day basis.

He/She must possess strong critical and analytical skills, self-initiated, and is a problem solver. Must Possess good interpersonal and organizational skills particularly as the position requires coordination, cooperation, and interaction with other managers and operating units of the company.

He/She must possess good reporting, writing, and communication abilities and must be familiar with local best practices, e.g., legal, audit, taxation, accounting matters and general laws and regulations.

Interested applicants are requested to send their comprehensive resumé with ID pic and current salary package to:

**Mailbox Number 28-A
RCBC Plaza, Ayala cor.
Buendia Ave., Makati City
email: hr@bayviewtechnology.com**


More employment opportunities in today's JOB MARKET.
Every Sunday with the INQUIRER

InterContinental Hotels Group are premier employers wherever they are located around the globe and we are currently looking for people to join our growing Philippine Reservations Centre!

We want you on our TEAM...

Customer Service Representatives

➢ *Will mainly interact with the frequent stayer program members of InterContinental Hotels Group from around the globe.*

☑ Experience/education in the hospitality industry an advantage
☑ Innate ability to ask questions to identify callers needs

E-Master Specialists

➢ *Responds to customer contacts by providing first-level support for the consumer internet site and On-line services through multiple contact channels including telephone and email.*

☑ Technical background in browsers, ISP's and online navigation an advantage.
☑ Must have excellent analytical and problem solving skills

Reservation Sales Agents

➢ *Will mainly interact with customers for reservations and be the initial point of contact for general reservations inquiries adhering to the reservation and rate strategy procedures of InterContinental Hotels Group from around the globe.*

☑ Sales background is required
☑ Exceptional listening and responding skills
☑ Enjoys selling a product through high level of customer service

We are also looking for:

- ➢ **Spanish-Speaking Customer Service Representatives**
- ➢ **Administrative Assistant**

... with more than 3,800 hotels in 6 continents across more than a 100 countries,

WE are the most global Hotel Company.

Our frequent stayer program is the largest in the world with 24 million members to date!

Our compensation and benefits is considered one of the best in the industry and employees have benefits in any of our hotel brands around the world!

[illegible]

29/F, Tower II, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Avenue, Makati City ✉ ☎ 857-8800

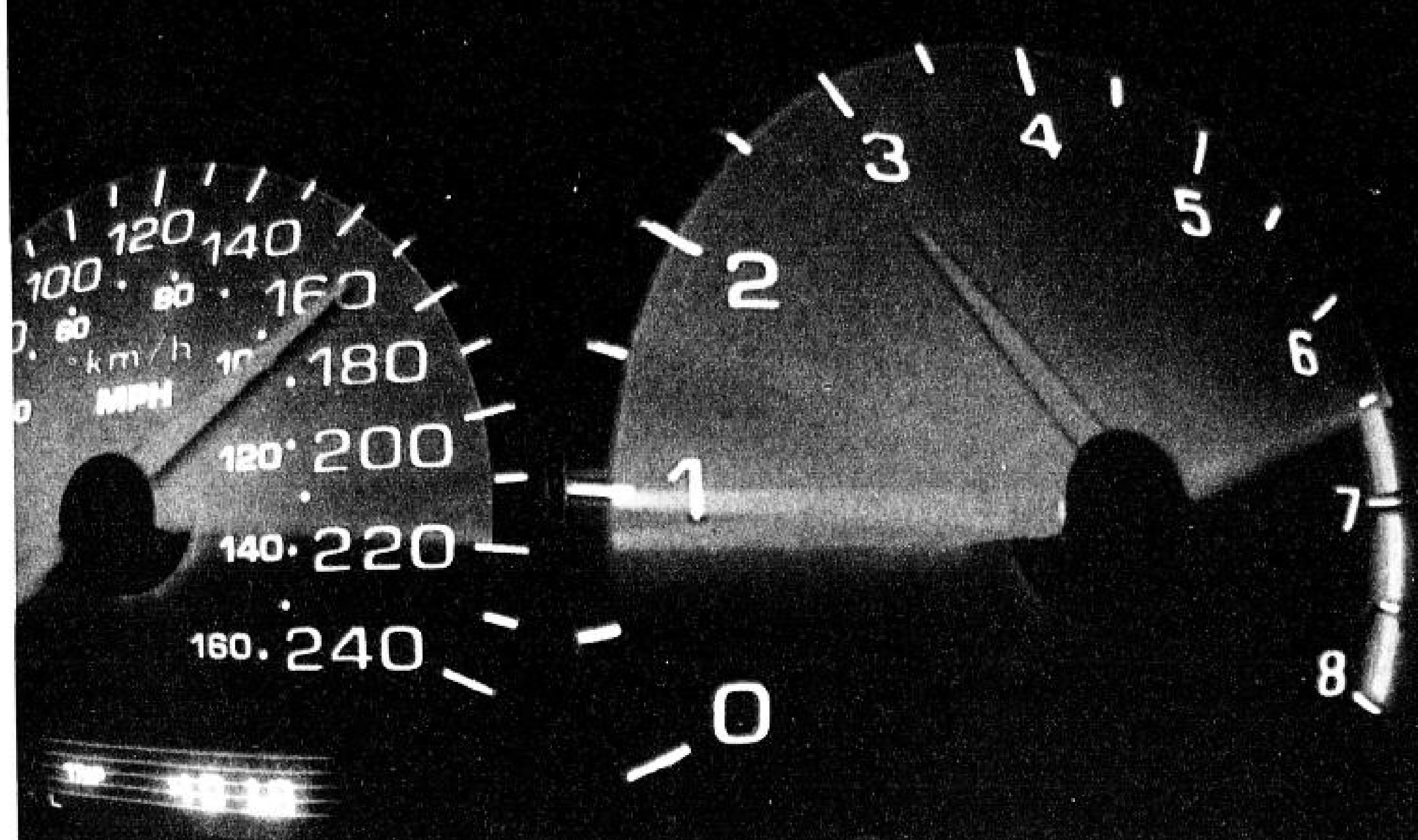
✉ PHLRO.Resumes@ichotelsgroup.com

You may visit our website at www.ichotelsgroup.com

Pedal to the metal.

Tireless Dedication.

Driven with passion.



Convergys, the world's largest call center and one of America's Most Admired Companies, is now looking for outstanding inbound and outbound customer care representatives ready to provide unwavering client support not bound by time, culture, nor location.

Visit our Makati Office, located at Convergys One, 6796 Ayala Ave., cor Salcedo St. Legaspi Village, Makati City, and experience 1 day processing! Our center is open from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, Mondays to Saturdays.

Got call center experience? Apply with us and receive a premium. All applicants hired for the month of December shall receive a cash bonus upon hire. Incentives are regularly given to performing employees!

Recruitment Hotline: 857.7760
philippinesrecruitment@convergys.com

Convergys One
6796 Ayala Ave., cor Salcedo St. Legaspi Village, Makati City

CONVERGYS
Outthinking Outdoing

Meno Gaia

The Leader in Total Home Care in Japan

Mezzanine and 2F, [illegible] Bldg., [illegible] Streets
8000 Davao City PHILIPPINES Tel No. (082) [illegible] to 21

APPLY FOR OUR NEW DAVAO OFFICE
Stable Jobs, Challenging Work

WE ARE IN NEED OF:

ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS (ONLINE)

- Excellent in Written and Oral English
- **Call Center** and **Broadcasting** Experience an Advantage

COMPUTER GRAPHICS ASSISTANTS

- Excellent in Auto CAD Operation

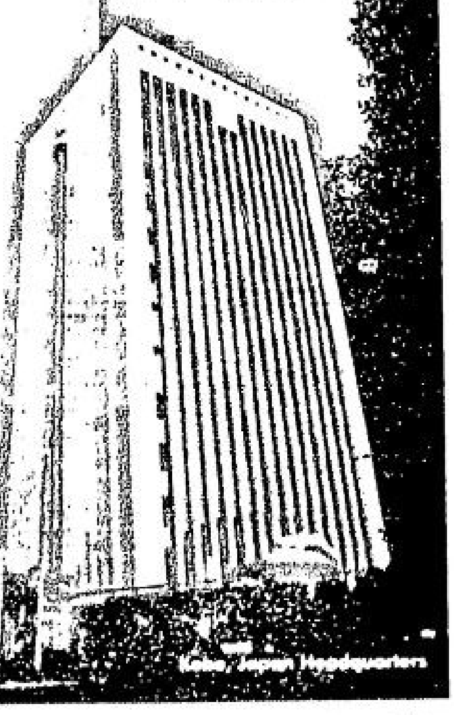
JOB INTERVIEW

December 22, 2005 (Thursday)
Makati Palace Hotel
P. Burgos Corner Caceres Streets, Makati City
11:00AM - 6:00PM

Only this day in Manila • Job opening in Davao

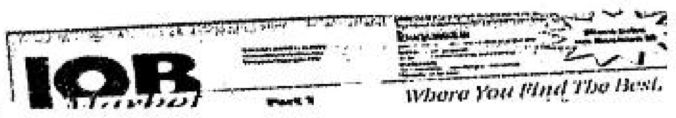
E-MAIL your RESUME by DECEMBER 20th to:
menogaia_davaocity@yahoo.com

In Meno Gaia Company Limited and for more than 20,000 of our member-clients in Japan, we ensure the world's future by paying close attention to the environmental fitness of every home. We do everything from sanitation to house remodeling.



Kobe, Japan Headquarters

More employment opportunities in today's JOB MARKET [illegible] INQUIRER



WANTED IMMEDIATELY

A Hongkong-based International corporation with branches in Asia-Pacific and U.S. Territories and affiliated with local multinational companies is in need of the following personnel for its last quarter expansion program in the Philippines.

MANAGEMENT TRAINEE/TRAINING OFFICER

- Male/Female, 20 years old or above
- Personable, articulate with good communication skills
- Graduate of any 4-year course or higher

SERVICE CREW/MARKETING ASSISTANT

- Male/Female, 18 years old or above
- Can work with minimum supervision
- At least 2 years college education

Successful applicants can earn above-industry remuneration package including cash incentives, bonuses and fringe benefits and a chance to travel abroad.

Interested parties may apply in business attire at 6/F Galleria Corporate Tower, corner EDSA and Ortigas Ave., Ortigas Center, Quezon City (beside Robinson's Galleria) on Dec. 19, 20, 21, 2005 (Mon/Tue/Wed) from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Look for Morena

(PLEASE BRING THIS AD)

CEBU
Rm. 152-A Binamira Bldg. 4
Corordo Ave., Cebu City
look for Juliet

LAOAG
Ground Floor, RBB Bldg. Layasca
corner Lazaro St.,
Brgy., 10 Laoag City beside PLDT
Look for Judith

DENTSPLY

Dentsply (Phils.) needs

DENTAL SALES REPRESENTATIVES (DSR)

21 to 26 years old
College graduate
Background in dentistry or as a dental technician is an advantage

Area: Ilocos Region, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog and Metro Manila

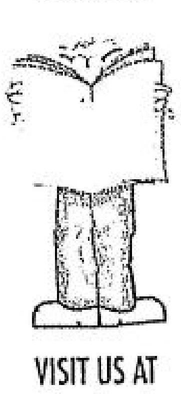
Submit no later than 23 December

Letter of application
Resumé
2 x 2 Photo with a nice warm smile
Collegiate transcript of records.

To: The Sales Manager
E-mail Add: info@dentsply-phil.com.ph
Post/Handcarry 4/F 6797 Ayala Ave. Bldg.
6797 Ayala Ave. cor V.A. Rufino St.
Makati City

Previous applicants neet not apply.

Where you find the best.



VISIT US AT
www.jobmarketonline.com

JOB Market

INQUIRER

JOB Market

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2005
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JOB*Market* is exclusively for job advertisements.
This special section comes FREE with your copy of the
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
published every Sunday and distributed in key cities
RATES (E-VAT exclusive)
P230 per column centimeter every Sunday
DEADLINES
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Thursday 12:00 noon

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For jobseekers, log on to: www.jobmarketonline.com

★★ *Where You Find The Best.*

Text us your feedback: Inquirer jm name/city/message. Send to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Experience: West

NOW HIRING!

- Technical Support Representatives
- Customer Service Representatives
- Teleservices Representatives
- Operations Managers
- Performance Assessment Specialists
- Production Team Leaders
- Trainers

Excellent English oral and written communication skills required.

Why Choose West?

- Competitive pay
- Choose your own schedule; flexible full- and part-time opportunities
- Excellent advancement opportunities
- Fun work environment

Guaranteed base wage increases every six months!

Start in training on December 19th or 26th on our temporary project and receive a

Training Completion Incentive

Ask Human Resources for more details when applying.

Apply Now:

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West Contact Services Inc.
28/F Exportbank Plaza
Don Chino Roces cor Sen.
Gil Puyat, Makati

Phone: 857-7400
Fax: 857-7431/32
Email: MakatiJobs@west.com

west®

This is your opportunity to build your career with an industry leader!!!

CUSTOMER RELATIONS SERVICE DIVISION HEAD

Description:
The Customer Relations Service (CRS) Division Head is responsible for the planning, implementation and administration of all segments of the Company's customer relations and security program nationwide, including physical, technical, personnel, procedural and electronic security. He shall provide continual consultation and written reports to top management concerning security and safety issues; work in close coordination with operations to insure that the Company's employees, customers, facilities and assets are protected; coordinate with Security Agencies and key government agencies and business sectors; plan safety procedures and implement safety policies, conduct continual surveys of all offices, and its perimeter to determine the need for additional security services, and make appropriate recommendations.

Qualifications:
Candidate must possess unquestionable integrity and have solid work experience in security and safety operations, preferably in a property management or a retail business enterprise. Minimum qualifications: graduate of a four-year security/military, management, or business course with significant exposure to liaison work dealing with various local government and other business sectors; strong organization and people skills; energetic; dynamic; proven leadership abilities; flexible to working / shifting schedules; Male; at least 5'7" in height.

Travel throughout the Philippines will be required.

Interested applicants may send resumé with 2" x 2" recent ID picture:

HUMAN RESOURCE DIVISION
Box No. KA-041-05
c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer
G/F Trinity Building, T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila

CARITAS DON BOSCO SCHOOL

Laguna Technopark, Bgy. Binan, Binan, Laguna
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 39935, LTI Post Office, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
Tel. No. (049) 541-2954

A Catholic School in Laguna which offers Academic and Technical courses is in need of:

TEACHERS

For both elementary and high school in all Academic and Technical subjects

Interested applicants must be:

- BS Secondary Education graduate major in English, Mathematics, Filipino, PE, Music, Computer Science or other related fields (for High School)
- BS Elementary Education graduate (for Elementary and Pre-school)
- Licensed under PRC or CSC (LET or PBET)
- With teaching experience
- Computer literate
- Proficient in oral and written English
- A Catholic

Qualified applicants may send their Comprehensive Resumé, Letter of Application, Transcript of Records and 2x2 picture to:

CARITAS DON BOSCO SCHOOL
P.O. BOX NO. 39935, LTI POST OFFICE,
STA. ROSA, LAGUNA 4026

JOB OPENING

I. ELECTRICAL ENGINEER/ DRAFTSMAN

II. INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICIANS

- At least 2 years relevant working experience
- In good physical & mental condition
- Can work w/ minimal supervision for Item 1.
- Electrical engineering grad.
- CADD literate
- Can prepare electrical plans & estimates For Item II
- Knowledge in industrial controls & wiring
- Willing to accept provincial assignments

For inquiries contact
Ms. Talme @ 939-7079

INCOHO
Call Center Solutions

We are looking for dynamic and creative people to join our team!

INCOHO is looking for energetic individuals with a positive outlook in life and a thirst for challenges. If you are all of these, then you are the person we want!

CALL CENTER AGENTS

- Four-year college degree
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Exceptional problem-solving and strong negotiation abilities
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office
- Ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously
- Must have a strong tolerance to pressure
- Willing to work on a multi-shift environment
- US customer-contact experience is an advantage
- Experience in recovery collections will also be an advantage

We are also in need of HR Officer and Medical Transcriptionists with experience.

For those who are interested, kindly submit your comprehensive resumé with picture and transcript of records to **human.resources@incoho.com** or mail to **HR Officer, Incoho Philippines, Inc., 6th Flr Sycip Salazar Hernandez Gatmaitan (SSHG) Building, 105 Paseo de Roxas, Legaspi Village Makati City.**

SC Johnson
A FAMILY COMPANY

S.C. JOHNSON is an American multinational company recognized as one of the world's leading manufacturers of household care products with brands like ***Baygon, Raid, OFF!, Glade, BayFresh, Mr. Muscle, Pledge, Toilet Duck,*** and ***Johnson Wax.***

We are currently in need of young, dynamic and highly skilled person to fill the position of:

GENERAL ACCOUNTANT

Under the general supervision of the Senior Accountant/Finance Manager, processes local payables, reviews and analyses various schedules related to accounts payable, interfaces AP transactions to the GL, and prepares journal voucher entries.

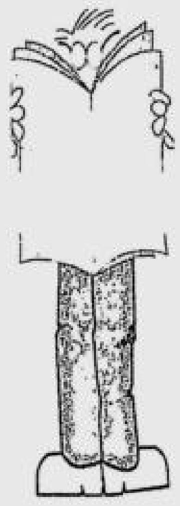
QUALIFICATIONS:

- A Certified Public Accountant
- At least 2 years General Accounting experience in a consumer goods manufacturing company
- Good oral and written communication skills
- Highly proficient in MS Word and MS Excel
- With good moral character

Send your application letter, comprehensive resumé with picture not later than January 3, 2006 to:

The Human Resources Department
S.C. JOHNSON AND SON, INC.
6371 Estrella Street, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City
or send through e-mail at: cslee@scj.com

Where you find the best.



JOB Market ONLINE

VISIT US AT
www.jobmarketonline.com

A prestigious company is in need of:

Management Trainee
- Male, single, age 22 to 32 years old
- College graduate
- Preferably fluent in speaking conversational Mandarin
- Willing to be assigned abroad

Quality Control/Research and Development Technician
- Male or Female
- Computer literate, graduate of Food Tech., Chemistry, Chemical Engineering or Industrial Engineering
- At least 1 year experience in Quality Control / Quality Assurance and/or Research and Development work
- Willing to be assigned abroad

Architectural Designer
- Graduate of B.S. Architecture
- At least 2 years work experience
- Has a supervisory experience
- Knowledgeable in computer aided design and drafting

Chemical Engineer
- Graduate of B.S. Chemistry / Chemical Engineering
- Preferably with work experience
- Can supervise and lead a team
- Willing to be assigned abroad

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Mail: Luzon: c/o DR. M. MELGAR Unit 3002,
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Rm. 205, Doña Luisa Bldg. Fuente Osmeña, Cebu City

Visayas and Mindanao applicants will be contacted for interview on January 6 & 7, 2006 respectively (9:00 am – 3:00 pm)
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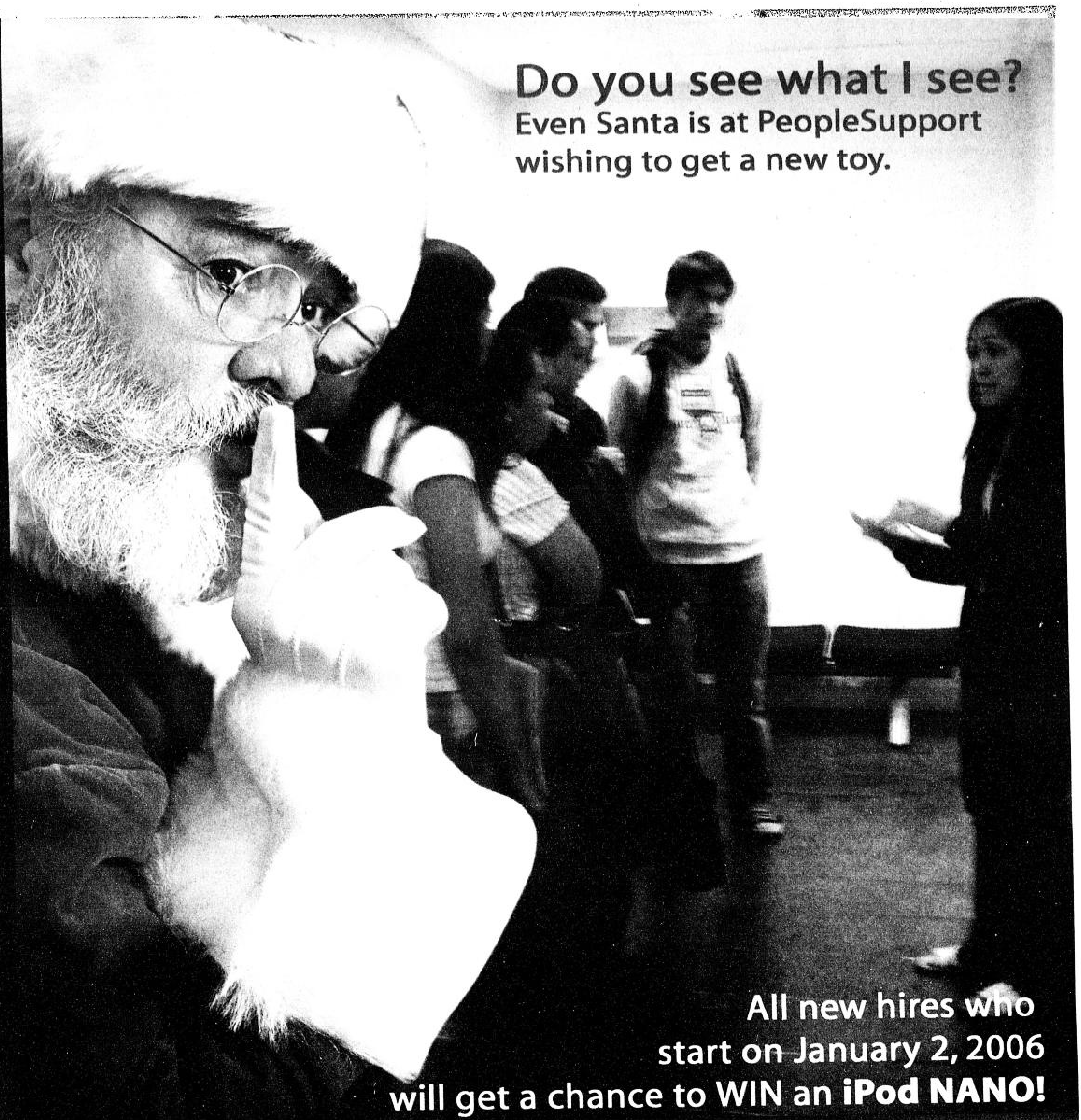

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Third Section of Job Market
People at work on page 2 & 3

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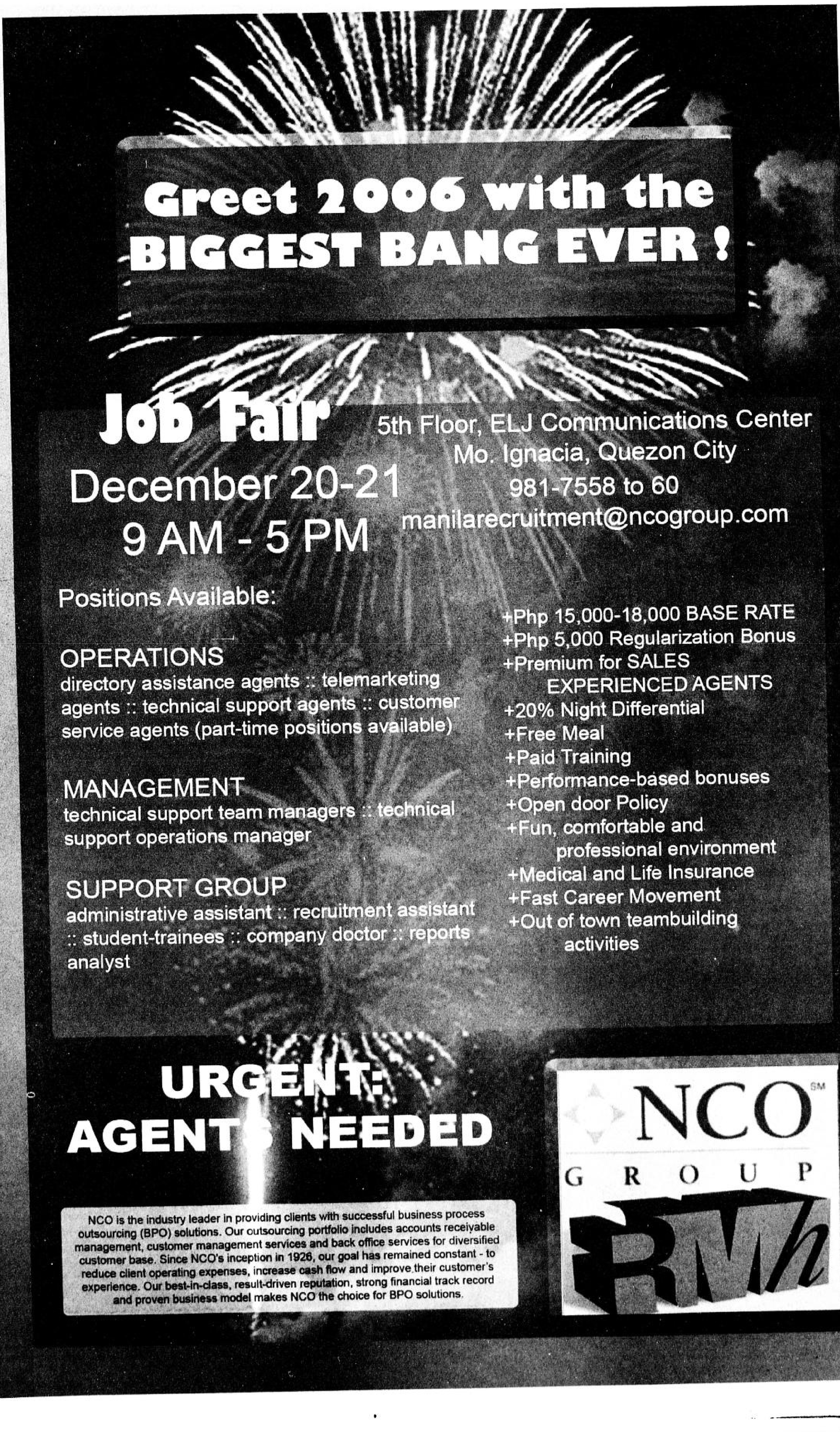

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2005

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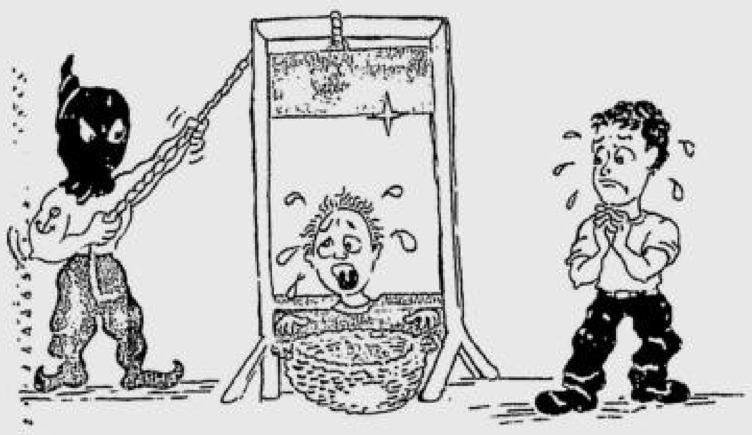
On the way out

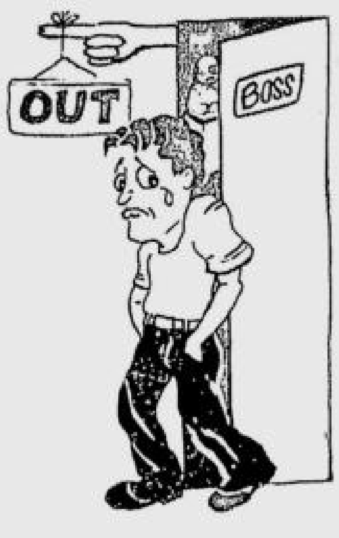
BEST ★ Attitudes

By Teresa R. Tunay
Illustration by Rolando Reyes

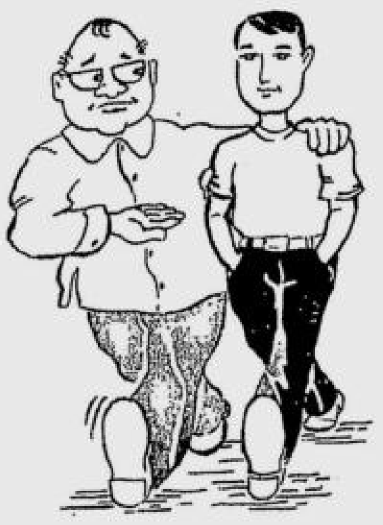


BEING RETRENCHED IS NOT RARE THESE DAYS. "BUS-iness is bad" seems to be the most common reason companies give for retrenchment. No one knows who will become a victim, when or why, and it would be presumptuous to believe you will never be one. It is being realistic to think that anyone—including yourself—may one day be "it." It is also wise to be prepared for the worst although you're hoping for the best. When you're in touch with reality, the shock and the pain of retrenchment will be much less stressful.

1 Should you one day find yourself being dismissed, remember: it's not the end of the world. You can still be in control. It's your choice: you can either be mad, sad, feel resentful, lose hope and be so disagreeable that you'll find it hard to find a new job; or...



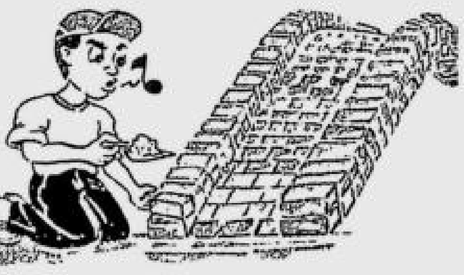
2 ...be cool, levelheaded, optimistic and confident that being dismissed is an opportunity to find a better job!



3 It is wise to accept what you can not change: management's decision which we hope is reasonably and humanely presented to you; and ...

4 ...to change what's within your power to change: your attitudes which can spell the difference between defeat and victory.

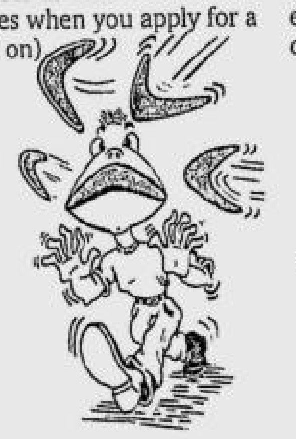
5 No matter how unfair you feel your dismissal may have been ("Why me?"), graciously accept it—this shows maturity on your part and keeps your bridges to the company intact.



6 If you must negotiate for more benefits like a bigger separation pay, conversion into cash of unused vacation and sick leaves, etc., approach the right people, and present your case calmly and courteously.

7 Aim for a quick, neat turnover of responsibilities. Make sure you don't leave any stone unturned particularly when you have cash or vital documents in your care.

8 Do not badmouth anyone, either superiors or coworkers. Badmouthing acts like a boomerang and establishes you as an untrustworthy person. (Besides you may want to use your bosses as character references when you apply for a job later on)



9 Leave a good feeling among your coworkers when you go. Be as cheerful as you can during your last days at work; if possible, organize a "going away" get together with your closest friends on your last day of work. Remember: it's not the end of the world, but the beginning of a new you!

Choosing to obey

By Bishop Precioso D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

FRED REMAINS JOBLESS AFTER BEING FIRED FROM his company many years ago due to insubordination to his supervisor. His job hunting in several companies was unsuccessful especially when the reason for his job loss was known. He realized too late that obedience to his superior is very important in the workplace; in fact, it could have even given him greater chance of promotion. He thought that by obeying others he would lose his identity or lessen his dignity. He chose to disobey and so has remained without work.

The worker, who chooses to obey, however, makes a free decision to do so. He exercises his free will in applying for the kind of job he seeks, accepting all its demands including subordination to his superior. He should, therefore, see the positive aspect of doing the will of one's supervisor in the workplace—that it allows him to keep his job and consequently gives him and his family means to stay alive. Moreover, it makes him virtuous and dignified in the sight of both man and God. Choosing to obey reveals integrity and dignity in the person, while being forced to obey, albeit by one's personal needs and wants, diminishes human dignity. Man's dignity is lessened when his decisions are determined by his needs and or circumstances, no longer by his free choice.

Mary's obedience to the word of God in today's gospel is the model of the worker's obedience to the demands of his work and the workplace, and even to the will of his superiors at work. Like Mary, the obedient worker will be "blessed" not only in his work and in this life, but also in the life after. (*E-mail the author at* mfvg@skyinet.net)

REFLECTIONS
FOR THE
WORKING SOUL

A model of obedience

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

OBEDIENCE IN A WORKER IS A DELIGHTFUL THING TO behold, especially in this day and age when people tend to be so pigheaded from an "overdose" of self-confidence. But obedience can also backfire. Let's look at the case of Tony, a promising department assistant in a recording company. Noting his cooperativeness, initiative and most of all, obedience at work, his supervisor gave Tony all the breaks proper to his position in the office. Everybody seemed satisfied, until a year after he got in, when Tony's performance became rather erratic. His mistakes became more frequent, and soon his supervisor discovered that he had committed more but concealed these from him. There was also a subtle change in Tony's behavior—but not too subtle to escape his supervisor's attention. Soon he found out that Tony had been "too obedient" a worker—taking on tasks from the bosses of his boss, going beyond the expectations of his job.

It became clear that Tony had ambitions of becoming a recording star, and his show of extraordinary obedience was but his way of buttering up to the big bosses. His coworkers would openly call him a sucker, but he just shrugged them off. One day, Tony made an awful mistake in "obeying" the GM. Tony said he was merely trying to be helpful to the GM. The GM was furious because Tony's "help" led to a serious mistake in a business contract. Tony was fired; his supervisor could not defend him as Tony had "obeyed" without consulting him.

When the underlying motivation for one's obedience is self-gain (as in Tony's case), obedience in reality becomes a mere disguise for manipulation, and will sooner or later backfire. For obedience to flower and serve the common good, it must be aimed at the highest ideals and carried out with the purest of intentions as Mary, the model of obedience, did. (*E-mail the author at* teresa_de_manila@yahoo.com)

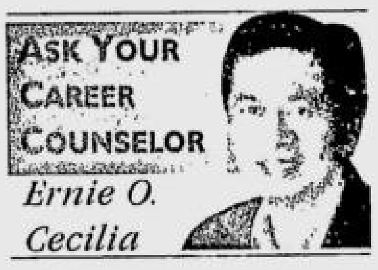
ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Gospel. Lk. 1:26-38

Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

'How can I convert ideas into action?'

By Ernie O. Cecilia, FPM



I HAVE WORKED FOR OVER 10 years now with two companies, the latest of which is as a senior clerical staff in a multinational marketing corporation. My bosses and peers think that I am a creative person because I have many great ideas. However, I think I haven't done much because I find it hard to convert my ideas into action.

Can you help me understand how to implement my ideas in practical ways?

Creative

You seem to have the basic stuff to start on a great career. Usually, people who succeed know whether they are "idea" persons, "thing" persons or "people" persons.

If you know that you are great in generating ideas, perhaps you can focus on it and enhance your processes to ensure that your ideas are converted into actions.

As they say, things are made twice—first in the mind (idea), then physically (product). When ideas remain ideas, they hardly mean a thing. In this day and age, results are what matter most.

The following are hard-hitting ideas that can help you convert your ideas into action.

No one cares about your ideas

Usually, no one in this world will have the time and energy that you have for your own ideas. This is easy to understand because humans are by nature egoistic and egocentric. Therefore, you must champion your own ideas, and work hard to ensure that they will have the support of others.

Never expect another person to be as enthusiastic and energetic in pursuing your ideas. You own these ideas and you ought to take responsibility that they will fly.

Get noticed or get lost

No one will support your idea unless you get people to notice it. People have short attention span. If after 30 seconds none of what you are saying to them strikes a sympathetic chord, they'll scram or you better get lost.

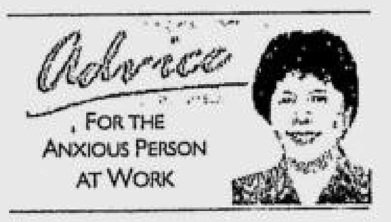
Whenever you have a great idea to share, make sure that in 15 seconds you are able to grab attention with a smashing opening. In the next 15 seconds, you must be able to hold interest

'HOW/P.3

MY TRABAHO DREAM. Philippine Daily Inquirer relaunches My Trabaho Dream for 2006 with Drake Beam Morin Philippines (DBM), a leading outplacement services firm. My Trabaho Dream will provide coaching and counseling services to selected beneficiaries to assist them in finding their dream jobs. At the signing ceremonies were: (seated from left) Inquirer SVP for sales and marketing Rene Reinoso, DBM president Mario Gatus, DBM director for marketing Vicente Kilayko; (standing from left) People at Work editor Regina Reyes, DBM consultant Loree Mante and Inquirer marketing officer Chris Vida. Watch out for announcements in this section on how you can be selected as a beneficiary. RUDY ESPERAS

A Christmas wish: honest BIR agents

By Tita Datu Puangco



I AM A SMALL BUSINESSMAN engaged in manufacturing packaging materials. Since I am a member of a Christian Catholic community, I exert extra effort to make sure our company pays all the right taxes. Unfortunately, our honest efforts to pay the right taxes have been repaid by Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) representatives who would audit and bloat assessments of our company year after year. Every time an audit team comes around, the members always insinuate that the way to get over our problems is to pay them a certain amount without issuing receipts.

It is actually easy to come across with the money, but my Christian beliefs are violated by such despicable acts. I have tried seeking relief by talking to higher bosses. They take action by making things more difficult for us. So, I wonder, is everyone on the take? I dream of the day when all BIR agents we meet will be professional and above reproach.

In the past years, the story has been the same. Even though I feel it is an injustice, I just go ahead and pay what they assess me for. I have reached the end of the rope. My friends say that I have to be realistic if I want to stay in business. They have even suggested keeping two sets of books. But, I cannot do it.

I have chosen to close my business next year. This is the reason why I have the courage

A CHRISTMAS/P.3

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'How can I convert ideas into action?'

From page 2

in your idea. Failing that, other people's mind (and body) stray away from you and your idea.

What is in it for them?

People are always concerned about themselves. If you want people to buy in to your idea, tell them exactly what is in it for them and how they will get involved. Remember, no one cares as much about your ideas as yourself.

People tend to buy into ideas when you tell them exactly how they will benefit from these ideas. Most people do not want to invest anything in others' ideas unless they stand to reap tremendous returns. Tell them how the benefits will outweigh their costs or investments in terms of their money, time, effort, attention, cooperation, etc.

Know the rules first

A most difficult idea is one which involves change in others. Instituting changes that affect others is a most challenging task. It is like breaking the rules.

In my life, I have tried to master the art of breaking the rules. The first step that I learned and would like to share is simple: know the rules first. It is best to know the rules first before you start breaking them. Understand that some rules are more breakable than others.

When it comes to implementing ideas that affect others, you simply have to know how things are done. Before you tell them your cute idea, it is best to find out what they know and minimize what you don't know. The farther your idea is from the way things are now, the more difficult it is to convert into action. But it can be done.

Have accurate data

The best decisions are based on fairly accurate data. Conversely, when you shoot from the hip, you are likely to miss.

The importance of collecting your own data cannot be overemphasized. Solid data are the foundation of great decision-making. When pushing your ideas, use relevant data—costs, time spent, deviations, recurring issues, progress against goals, etc.

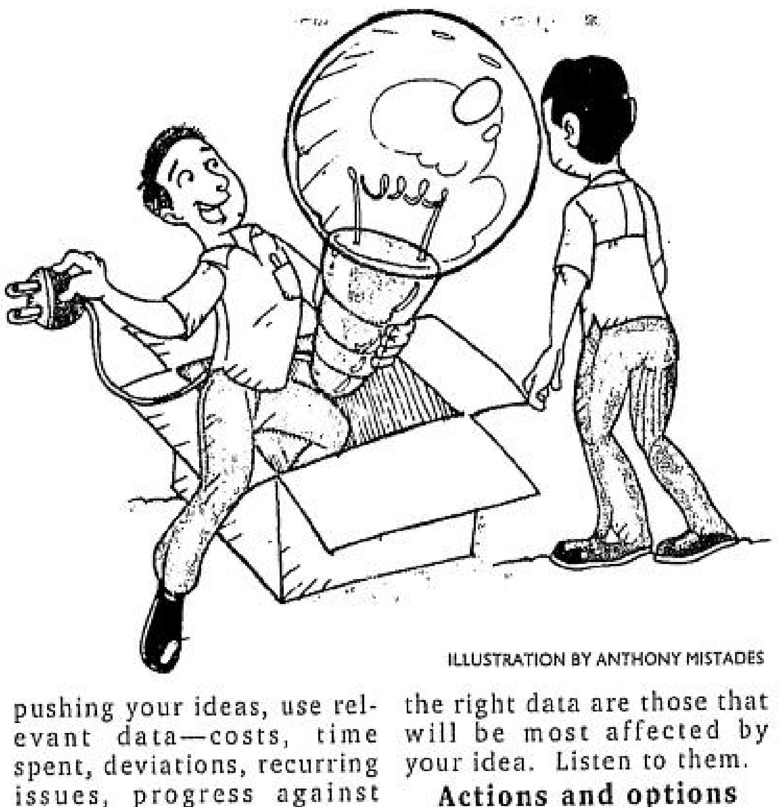

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

People want solid and hard facts before they buy into an idea. Painstakingly gather data and package them so can more easily push your idea. Sometimes, the best people to give you the right data are those that will be most affected by your idea. Listen to them.

Actions and options

Ideas remain ideas unless put to action. But before the action, there must be a plan. And other options, in case the plan fails.

When I was new in the corporate world, I was amazed at how the Kepner Tregoe process makes decision-making simple with its SA PA DA PPA method—situation analysis, problem analysis, decision analysis and potential problem analysis. Almost half a century later, this process still works.

When it comes to ideas, it is true that "the devil is in the details." You must spell out the results expected, the timelines, the resources needed, people responsible, and the unquantifiable effect on people, social backlash, and what could go wrong.

Bore holes in your plan

This sounds crazy, but I often criticize my own ideas to death. That way I can ensure that I have already heard the worst that even the craziest people will say. When you second guess what others will say about your idea, you can thoroughly prepare a great defense. Or if you succeed in making mince meat of your own plan, you can just shelve it and save yourself the agony of defeat and embarrassment.

But that doesn't mean giving up on your idea and your plan easily. The idea is to test your ideas and plans before others tear them apart. Act more devil than the devil's advocate and reshape your idea and plan if you see fit.

Ideas, like good intentions, need to be converted into action. As they say, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions."

(Public service announcement: There will be a grand reunion of all alumni of the University of Nueva Caceres, Naga City in September 2006. Alumni in Metro Manila can e-mail me their contact details so that the Organizing Committee can contact them.)

(Mr. Cecilia is the president and CEO of EC Business Solutions and Career Center, a human resource consulting firm. He was the president of Personnel Management Association of the Philippines or PMAP in 1999. His career books are available at popular bookstores. Send feedback to ernie_cecilia@yahoo.com.)

A Christmas wish: honest BIR agents

From page 2

to share with you my problem. My family and I plan to migrate to a country, where we don't have to pay bribes to stay in business. What is the value of all the hard work I put into my company if those who benefit are these people who make the lives of businessmen like me difficult?

Please give me advice. I am not exactly delighted to pay my taxes when I see the lack of infrastructure and the poor government services around.

Frustrated Businessman

Thank you for your letter. First of all, let me congratulate you for striving to be an authentic Christian. This means to go against the tide, not choosing what is easy and expedient to do what is right. I pray that more businessmen will be like you.

How can you address your challenges with BIR, when you think you have done everything that is in your power to do? I do not have ready solutions except one. This may seem like surrender, but it is not. I believe in the power of God to move this mountain of corruption. Let us all together pray that the current situation will improve.

ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

My dream is for the government to develop a transparent system similar to what the government achieved through the current system of individual tax returns. We see that for people who are employed the taxation system has become foolproof and corruption-free. I envision the day when a business is taxed based on gross and the company does not have to file elaborate tax returns. I believe that the less human interventions there are in the system, the better. I think the best way to check corruption is to make the system, reasonable, fair and not open to negotiation once put in place.

I am saddened that you have chosen to migrate. Our country is losing an honest businessman. I also believe that some BIR people are honest and to say that everyone is on the take may be too sweeping a statement.

I heard that many behavioral interventions ranging from ethics workshops, managing change and spiritual retreats have been undertaken in the BIR but with temporary impact in terms of reducing corruption. I think a change in system would be a better choice. God bless!

(Ms Puangco is CEO of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, a training and consulting company specializing in strategy management, leading change, human resource systems, leadership and enterprise training. For advice, e-mail advice@ancilla edc.com.ph *or call tel.. nos. 892-2895, 892-2896 and 892-2898)*

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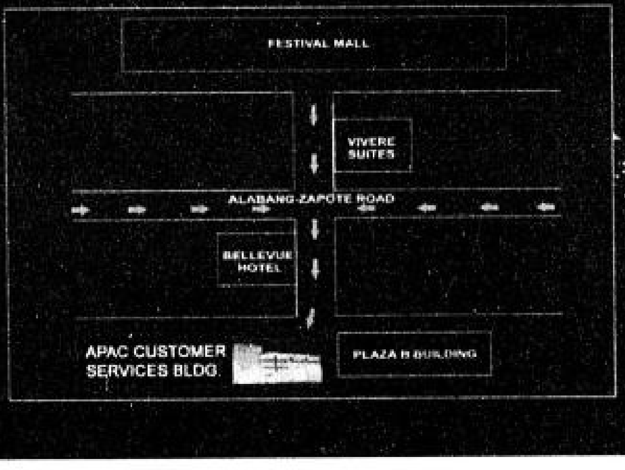

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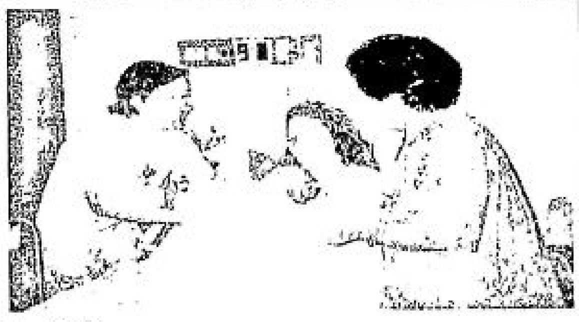

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ONE (1) BOOK DESIGNER who shall:

- Be responsible for the book's overall book design, including cover design, and layout of inside pages
- Submit a Design Brief expressing his/her design directions for the book for approval of both the Executive Editor and the Editorial Director/Editor. The Design Brief shall be based on the results of a prior meeting held with the Executive Editor, Editorial Director/Editor, Anthropologist, and Coordinator
- Work closely with the Editorial Director who is responsible for the management of the book's production and publication and to whom the book designer shall submit regular updates to ensure that the objectives of the book are met
- Submit two concepts for the book design, cover, and layout of inside pages based on the agreed Design Brief, from which one will be approved by the Executive Editor and the Editorial Director/Editor for design development
- Based on the approved concept, proceed with the implementation of the book design and layout
- Submit, periodically, drafts of layout to and for updates by Editorial Team
- Submit the final copy (artwork) in cd format to the Editorial Editor/Editor
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PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- A graduate of any four-year college course in design or fine arts
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- Have at least four years experience in book design and layout
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Program will commence in January 2006. Interested parties may submit their Letters of Intent and Resumes starting **19 December 2005 to 06 January 2006** to:

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DECEMBER 18, 2005

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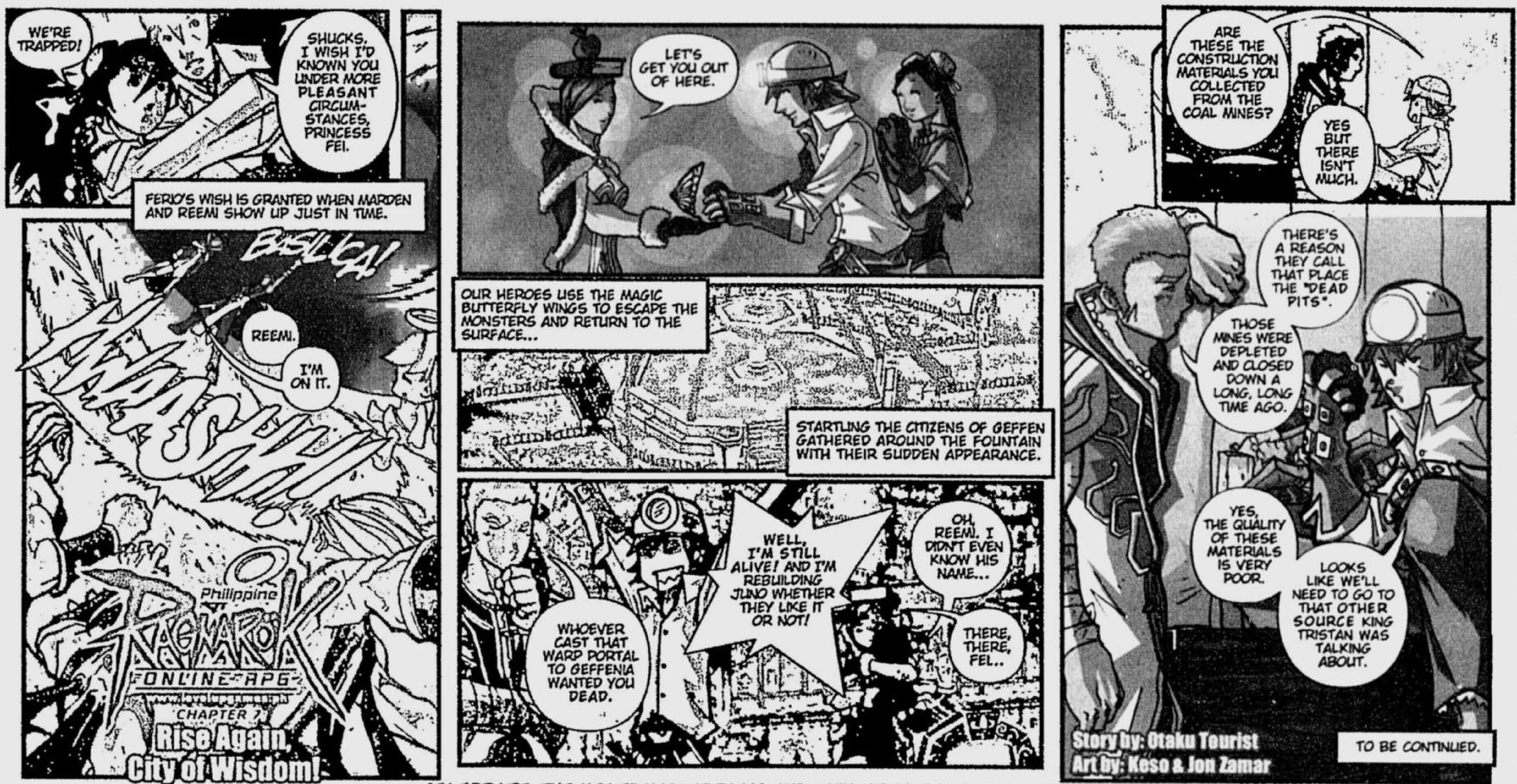
RAGNAROK

BY LEVEL UP GAMES


WE'RE TRAPPED!
SHUCKS. I WISH I'D KNOWN YOU UNDER MORE PLEASANT CIRCUMSTANCES, PRINCESS FEI.
FERIO'S WISH IS GRANTED WHEN MARDEN AND REEMI SHOW UP JUST IN TIME.
BASILICA!
REEMI.
I'M ON IT.
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CHAPTER 7
Rise Again, City of Wisdom!
LET'S GET YOU OUT OF HERE.
OUR HEROES USE THE MAGIC BUTTERFLY WINGS TO ESCAPE THE MONSTERS AND RETURN TO THE SURFACE...
STARTLING THE CITIZENS OF GEFFEN GATHERED AROUND THE FOUNTAIN WITH THEIR SUDDEN APPEARANCE.
WHOEVER CAST THAT WARP PORTAL TO GEFFENIA WANTED YOU DEAD.
WELL, I'M STILL ALIVE! AND I'M REBUILDING JUNO WHETHER THEY LIKE IT OR NOT!
OH, REEMI. I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HIS NAME...
THERE, THERE, FEI..
ARE THESE THE CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS YOU COLLECTED FROM THE COAL MINES?
YES BUT THERE ISN'T MUCH.
THERE'S A REASON THEY CALL THAT PLACE THE "DEAD PITS".
THOSE MINES WERE DEPLETED AND CLOSED DOWN A LONG, LONG TIME AGO.
YES, THE QUALITY OF THESE MATERIALS IS VERY POOR.
LOOKS LIKE WE'LL NEED TO GO TO THAT OTHER SOURCE KING TRISTAN WAS TALKING ABOUT.
Story by: Otaku Tourist
Art by: Keso & Jon Zamar
TO BE CONTINUED.

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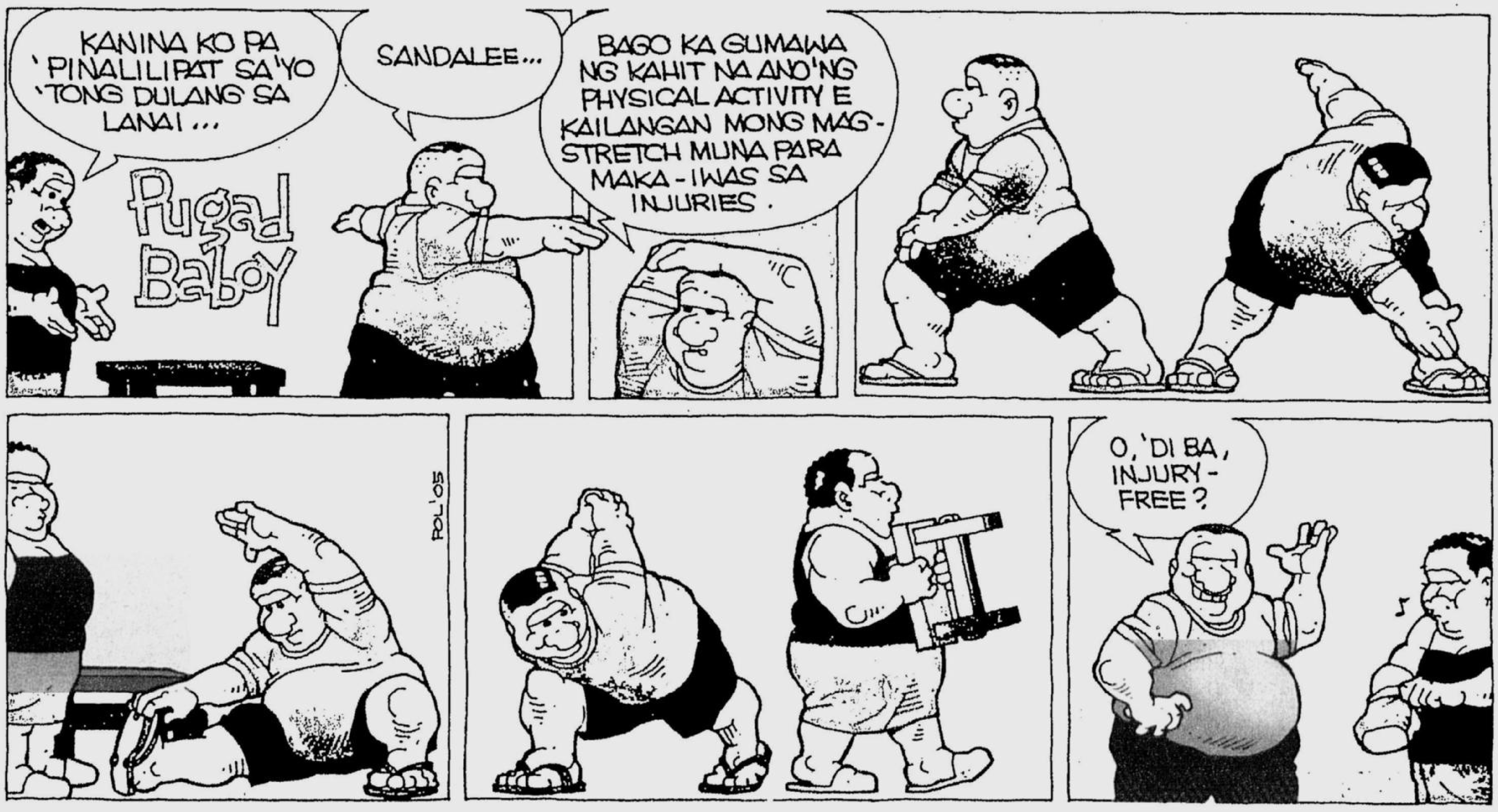
KANINA KO PA 'PINALILIPAT SA'YO 'TONG DULANG SA LANAI ...
Pugad Baboy
SANDALEE...
BAGO KA GUMAWA NG KAHIT NA ANO'NG PHYSICAL ACTIVITY E KAILANGAN MONG MAG-STRETCH MUNA PARA MAKA-IWAS SA INJURIES.
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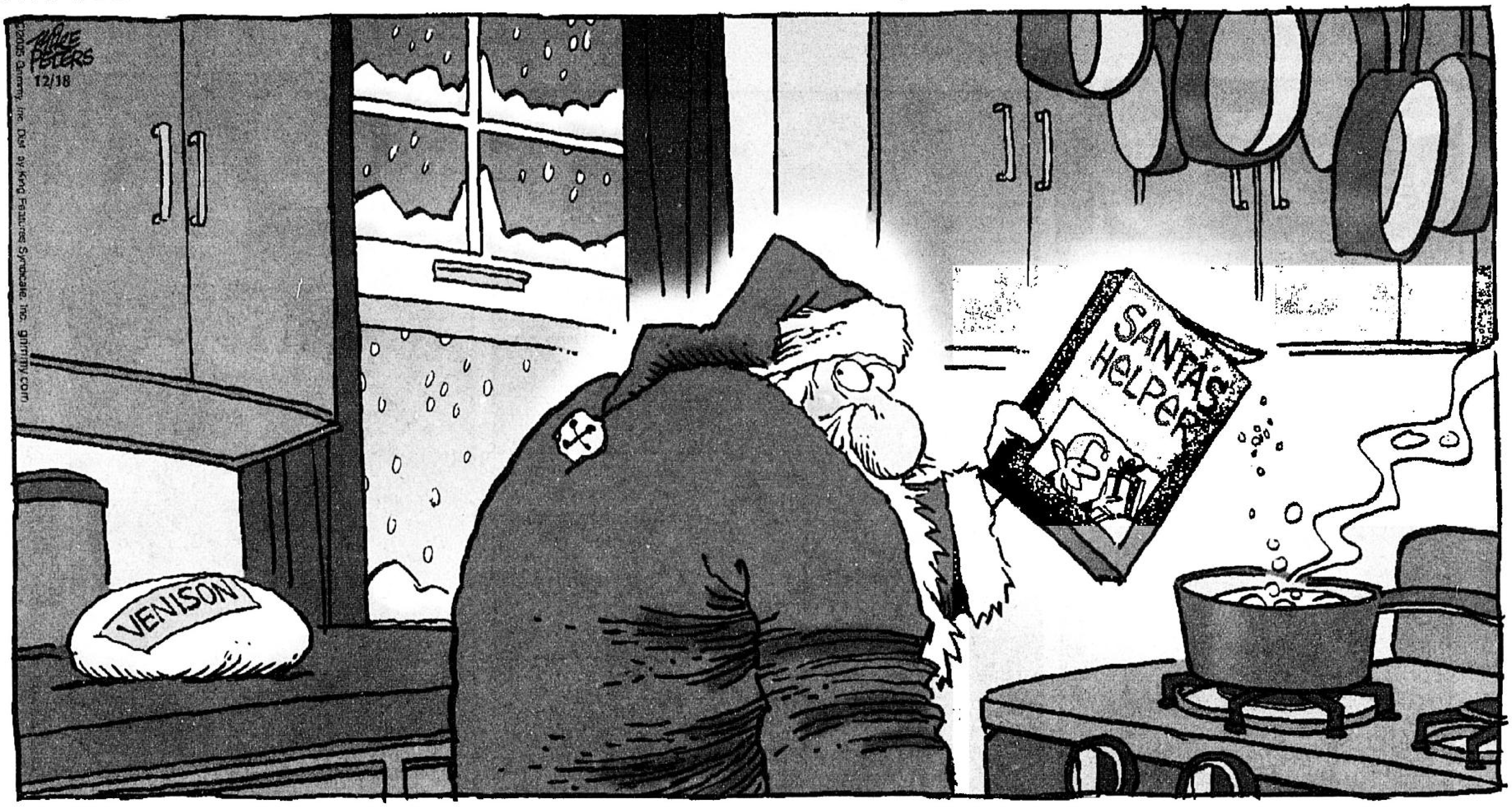
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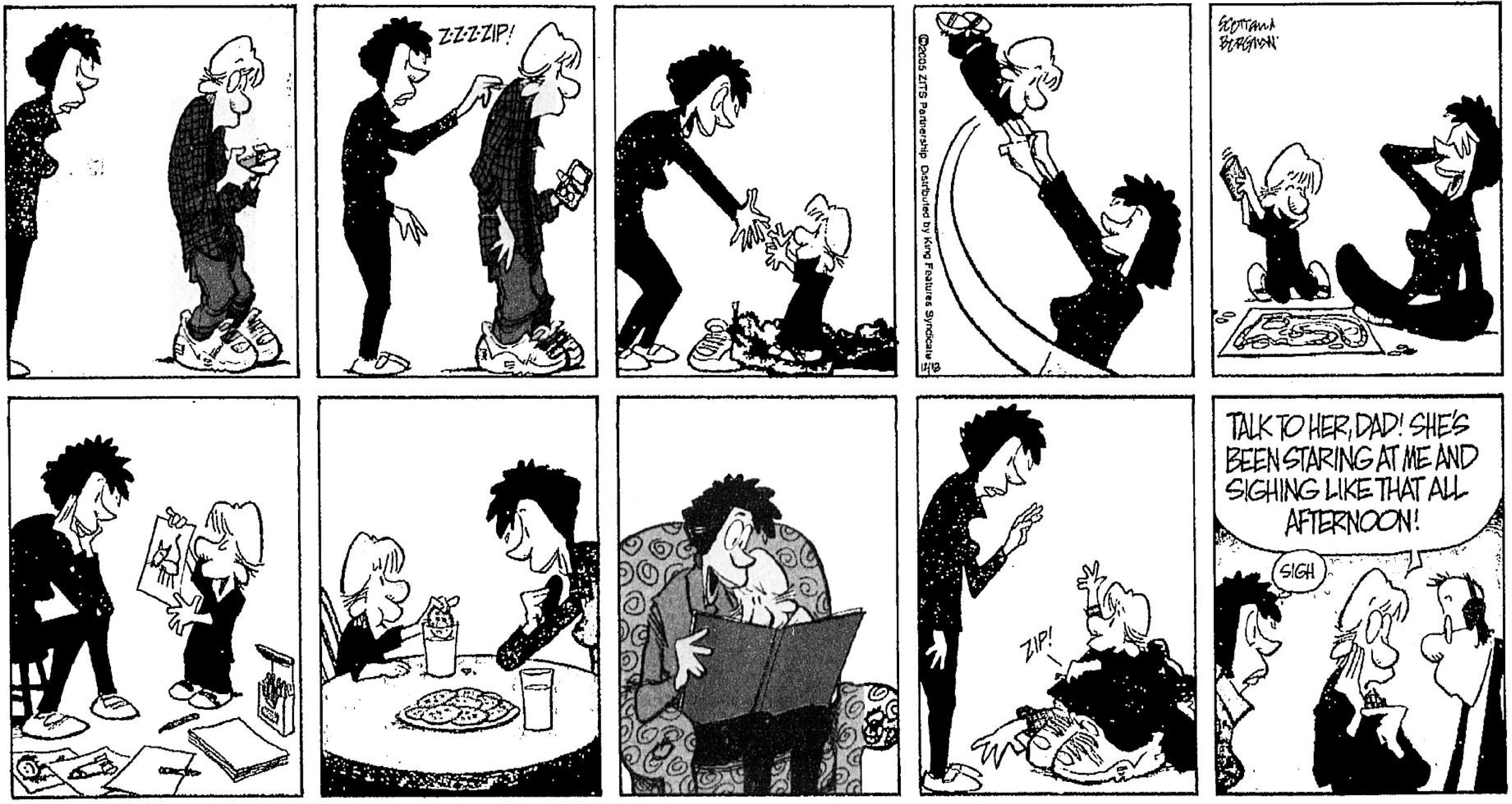
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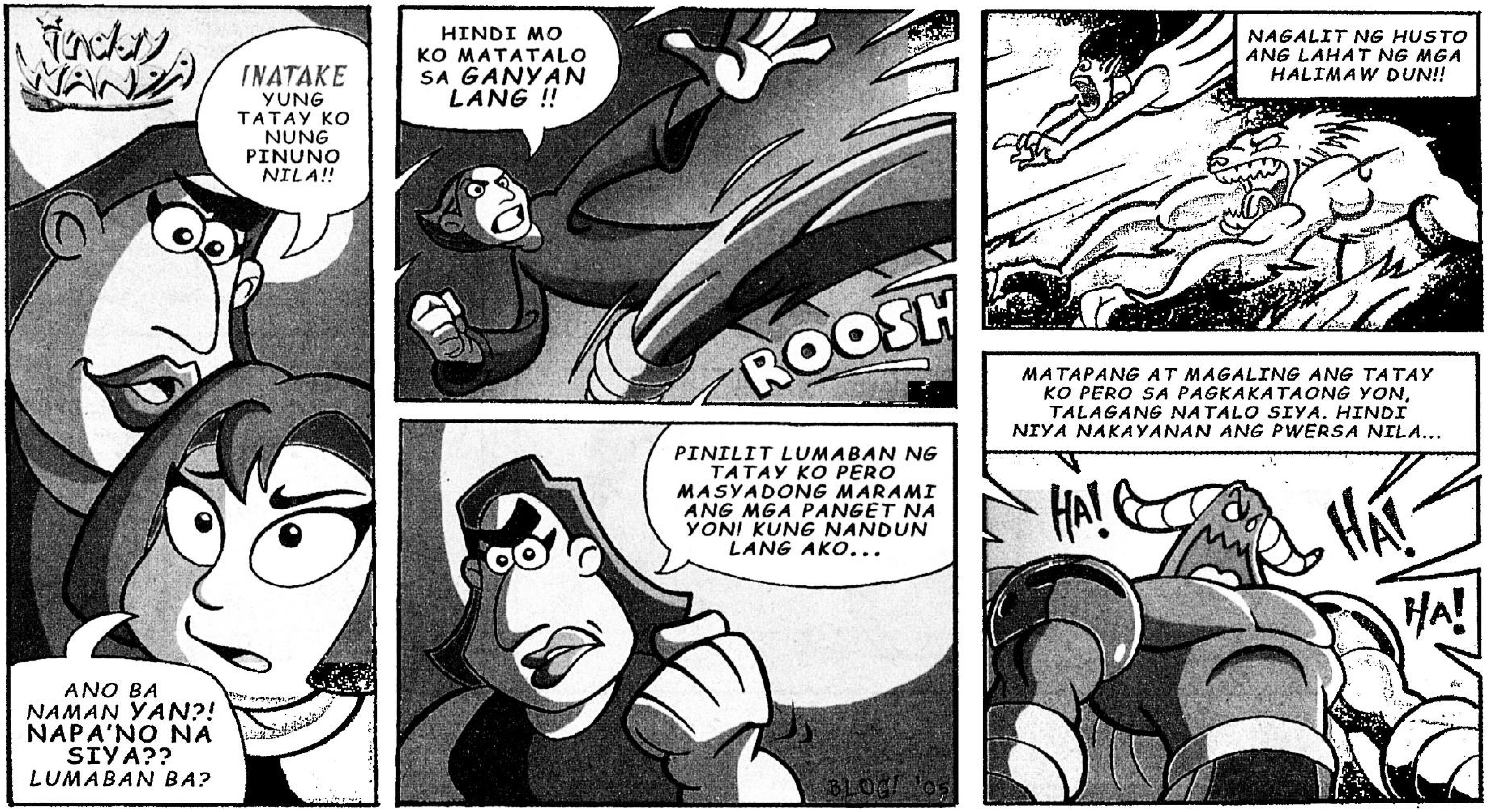
SCOTT and BORGMAN
ZIP!
SIGH
TALK TO HER, DAD! SHE'S BEEN STARING AT ME AND SIGHING LIKE THAT ALL AFTERNOON!

INDAY WANDA

BY BLOG CALIGUIA


Inday Wanda
INATAKE YUNG TATAY KO NUNG PINUNO NILA!!
ANO BA NAMAN YAN?! NAPA'NO NA SIYA?? LUMABAN BA?
HINDI MO KO MATATALO SA GANYAN LANG !!
ROOSH
PINILIT LUMABAN NG TATAY KO PERO MASYADONG MARAMI ANG MGA PANGET NA YON! KUNG NANDUN LANG AKO...
BLOG! '05
NAGALIT NG HUSTO ANG LAHAT NG MGA HALIMAW DUN!!
MATAPANG AT MAGALING ANG TATAY KO PERO SA PAGKAKATAONG YON, TALAGANG NATALO SIYA. HINDI NIYA NAKAYANAN ANG PWERSA NILA...
HA!
HA!
HA!

MOOMOO HUNTERS

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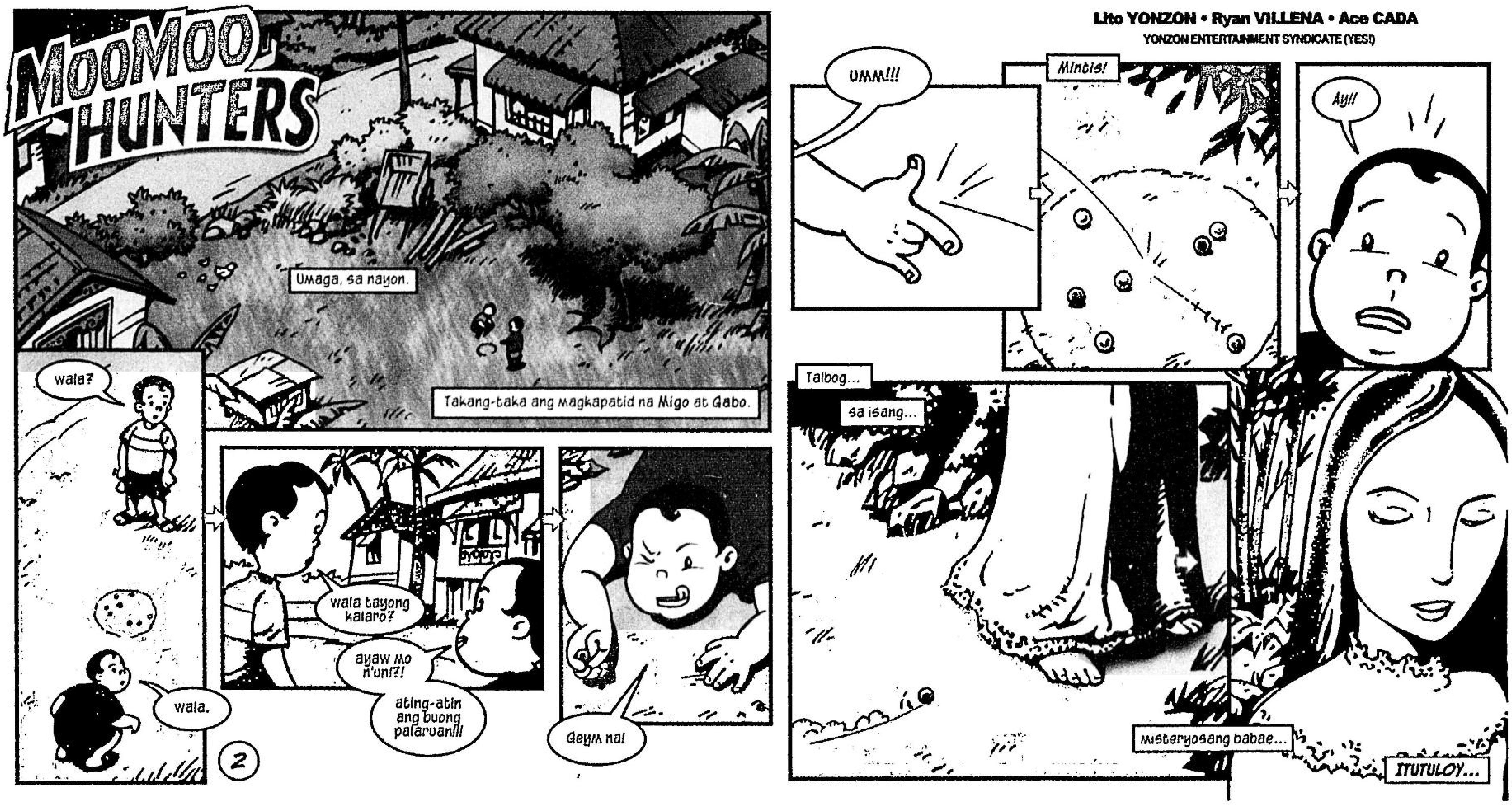
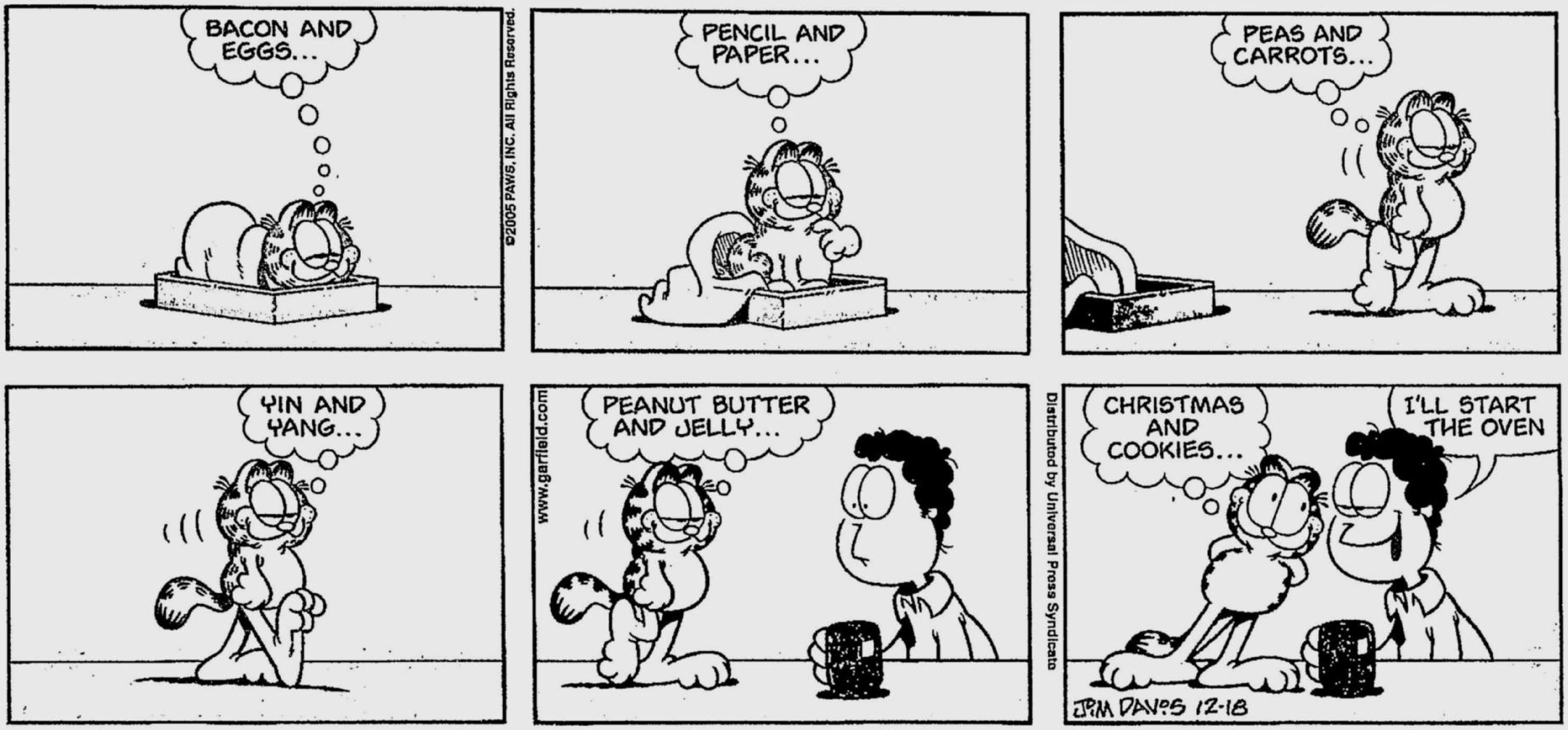

MooMoo HUNTERS
Umaga, sa nayon.
Takang-taka ang magkapatid na Migo at Gabo.
wala?
wala.
wala tayong kalaro?
ayaw mo n'un!?!
ating-atin ang buong palaruan!!!
Geym na!
2
UMM!!!
Mintis!
Ay!!
Talbog...
sa isang...
Misteryosang babae...
ITUTULOY...

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS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I'LL START THE OVEN
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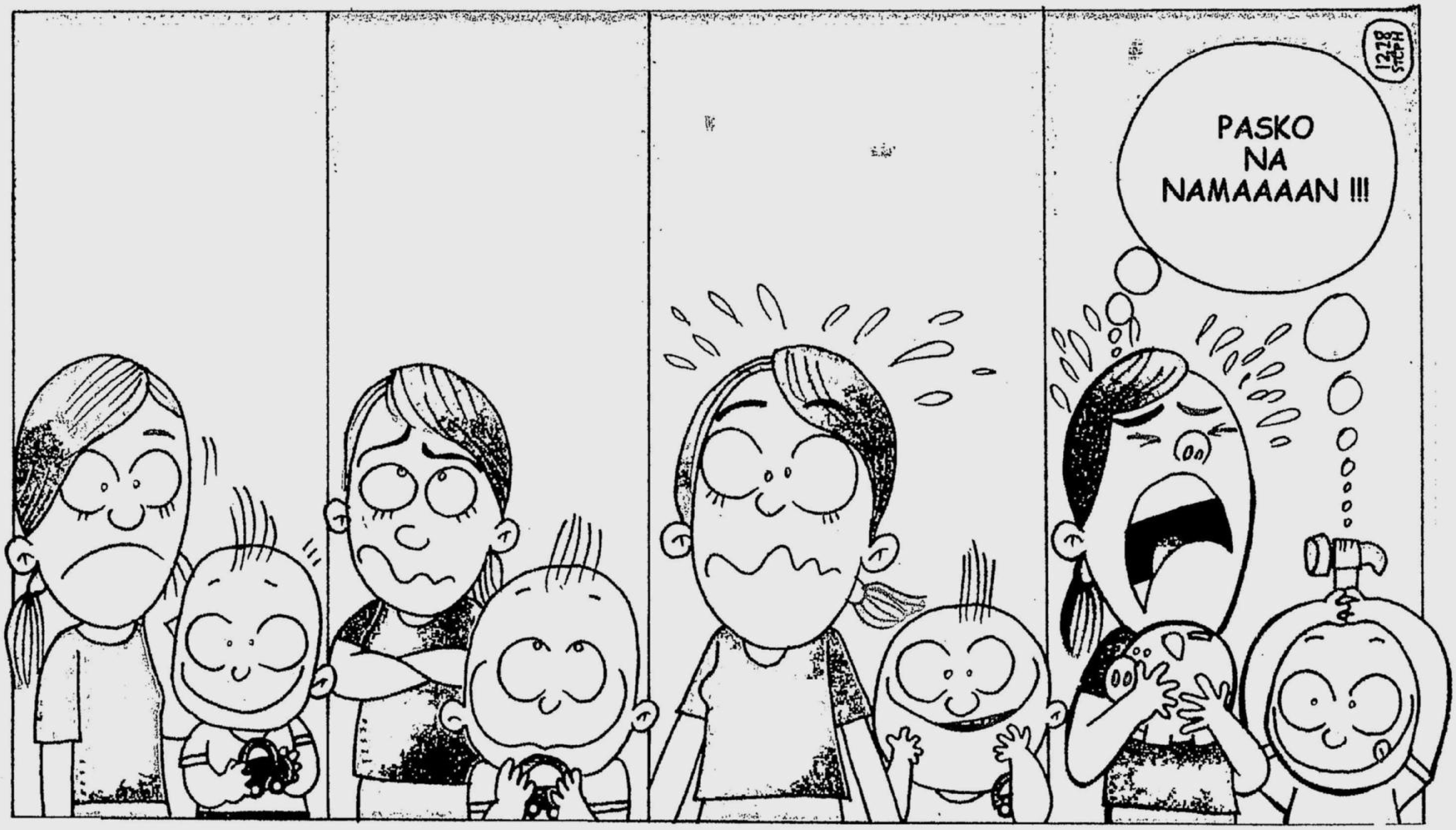
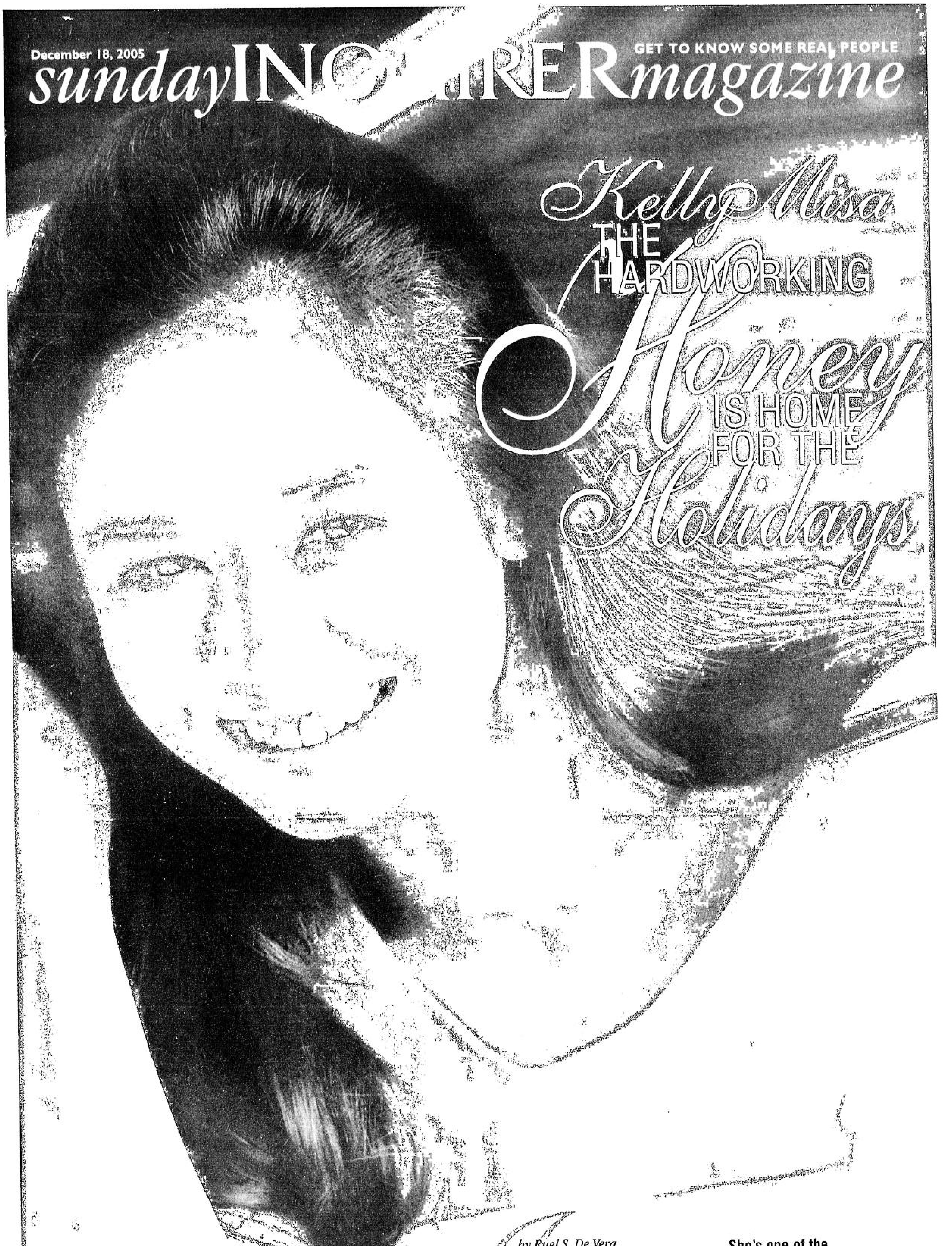
FULL HOUSE

BY STEPH BRAVO


12.18 STEPH
PASKO NA NAMAAAAN !!!

December 18, 2005
sundayINQUIRERmagazine
GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE



Kelly Misa

THE HARDWORKING Honey IS HOME FOR THE Holidays

by Ruel S. De Vera
photographs by Ernie U. Sarmiento

IT CAN be elusive and fleeting. But when you finally snare it, overnight fame can be spectacular, like a celestial body being born. This is how Kelly Misa happens.

Though she's been modeling for five years, Kelly is at full wattage now. She graces the covers of glossy magazines, and lights up billboards with her features. She's the ultimate chameleon—she can be sweet, sultry, sassy, sexy, super, sensual, safe, simple, sapiential. She is both self-possessed and self-effacing. But if you ask her, Kelly will tell you some-

To page 2

She's one of the country's hottest commercial models, enticing mortals to buy everything from fried chicken to beauty products with her smile. But this jet-setting babe is nothing like you'd expect

hairstyle and makeup by **A.J. Bagulo**
Kelly's clothes by **Joey Samson** and **Pink Soda**
photographed at the **Mandarin Oriental Hotel Manila**
special thanks to **Donna Lampano**

Classic Coke Bolipata, *p.3*

Sibolistas Turn Legal Eagles, *p.6*

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Love Notes
Joe D'Mango

So Near Yet So Far

It is hard for me to be her admirer and her best friend at the same time. I tried to date other women, but I can't get her out of my mind

Dear Joe,

I'm single, an I.T. Engineer working in a multinational company here in Makati. I'd say I have all the things that I need in life. Except love.

I'm writing about my best friend, Katie. We became friends in sophomore year in high school. I've been a loner since I was a kid but Katie changed all that. During college, Katie and I became the best of friends. We always say that our relationship is simply platonic. I kept all my feelings for her, Joe. In 2002, we were both in different relationships, but we still went out every now and then.

One day, I realized that I was falling for her. She had a boyfriend then so I kept my feelings to myself. When her boyfriend left her, I became the shoulder for her to cry on. That's when I gathered my guts, and told her I loved her. But she said no and I waited for her. In the end, she said she didn't feel the same way about me.

I tried to forget my feelings and avoid her, but we shared the same barkada so I just tried to bring back the old friendship like nothing happened. But my feelings remained. Lately I heard that she has a new boyfriend. It is hard for me to be her admirer and her best friend at the same time. I tried to date other women but I can't get her out of my mind. Sometimes I say to myself that I shouldn't have let myself love my best friend. Sometimes I want to leave the country to forget.

I'm lost, Joe. I'm finding it hard to move on. Here I am telling the closest person to me how much I love her, and I've been rejected. What should I do, Joe?

Sincerely yours,
Michael

Dear Michael,

"So near yet so far," that's what we sometimes feel about relationships that we want to go beyond the bounds of friendship. There are times when a friend falls for another friend who, unfortunately, doesn't feel anything special. It is a time when we begin to want someone so badly but cannot make a move because we are limited by the rules of engagement. There are friends who become lovers, and friends who just remain friends even when one wants to move one step further.

Michael, it is obvious that Katie doesn't have any romantic feelings for you at all. It seems like no matter how much you desire her affection you will simply be a friend to her. You can love her for the rest of your life but what good would it do if she refuses it? Honestly, I don't think you have to end your friendship. What you have to end is your incessant desire to be more than a friend to her. Running away wouldn't make any difference either because we can be miles away from the people we love, but as long as we care for them we can never truly forget them.

Michael, you took your chance in letting her know how you feel for her. She rejected your love but that doesn't mean that you have totally failed. She is still your friend and that is better than meaning nothing to her. We have to realize that having the ability to reach something doesn't always give us the privilege to have it. You have your friend but she cannot be more than that. You simply have to accept that, Michael. Let us always remember that sometimes we should be happy that someone is still part of our life. In the end, it would still be better than losing that person because we wanted more than what they can give us. Q

LoveNotes is heard every Friday at 10:15 a.m. with replays at 7 p.m. on Wave 89.1 FM. Get your daily love advice from Joe D' Mango via SMS by texting "lovenotes" to 2968

'It' girl: "I never thought I had a nice body."

Kelly

...from page 1

thing you don't expect: "I'm boring."

Raquel Denise Misa, 24, is the second in a brood of four born to Roberto Misa, who runs a prosthetics business, and Rosemarie Misa, who works for the Asian Development Bank. "I'd been trying out for the longest time, since I was 9, because my dad used to do commercials." Roberto, who appeared in ads since he was in his twenties and most recently appeared in a Sun Cellular ad, would go to VTRs with daughters in tow, encouraging them to try out as well. "And we were so shy, saying, 'No, we can't do it,'" she remembers. One of the things she's thankful for now is that her father understands the line of work she is in, although it took quite a while before her career started in earnest.

Really square

"I never got anything until I was 19. So I just kept trying and trying." Easily the most recognizable commercial model today, Kelly had never actually thought she would be a model. "I couldn't picture myself doing that. I was so awkward. I was super skinny." Remember, this is a girl who never owned a bikini prior to her modeling. "I never thought I had a nice body. But after that, I thought that I was okay. I used to be obsessed with gaining weight. I wanted to be like everybody else."

The self-admitted klutz thought of becoming a doctor and a journalist. Perhaps she could be in public relations. "Or maybe building corporate identity," she says. "It really interested me. I'm really square, so it suits my personality." This Organizational Communication graduate of De La Salle University was still in school then. And she would always get so close, making it to final casting but never to the actual ad. "I wanted it for so long and I would always get so disappointed." But she just kept at it. "And then finally I got it, in a Coke ad, and then they came one after the other," Kelly says with a smile.

After the group and supporting roles, she finally got her first lead casting, as the girl in the *"Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang"* KFC spot. "And that's when I was noticed, finally." Since then, Kelly's distinctive looks have graced spots for San Mig Cafe, Pantene, Pink Soda, and her most memorable appearance, as the girlfriend meeting her potential mother-in-law for the first time in a Pond's commercial. *"Gracias, Tita,"* indeed. She's asked most often about that, total strangers asking her, "What was that line again?" "So I just repeat it again and again," she says with a laugh. "Even in Hong Kong!" That's why it easily ranks as her favorite.

That moment was brought to you by Kelly's life-altering choice. "It was actually a decision," Kelly explains of her becoming a model full-time. The modeling gigs tended to conflict with school so that, once she had graduated, "I said I'd give myself one year. But then it's been two-and-a-half years already, and it's really good." She'd like to get into more hosting gigs.

Last year, Kelly jetted to Hong Kong and began doing print and catalog shoots for the Starz People agency, taking on projects in Thailand and Singapore, as well. She just came back after over four months in HK. Being off on her own was quite an adjustment, as she had to do her own laundry, cook her own food. Meanwhile, she's planning to learn to drive some time next year.

Simple things

Being here now is a blessing, because she gets to spend the season with her family. "We do that whole traditional holiday thing," she says. "All the way until January." They get together for a huge family reunion at her uncle's house, something they've done since she was a kid.

This taste for the simple things has always defined her, as does her somewhat obsessive-compulsive personality. "I'm very square. I like structure and I like everything neat, tidy and done in a certain way." Modeling means she had to learn how to be flexible, and the waiting between jobs is sometimes difficult for her. "I always pictured myself as having a stable, normal job." No partying hardy for this girl, either, and no staying up late. "I like staying at home, having quiet time. I'm actually very private."

She dreads being asked about hobbies. "Whenever I'm asked that question, I feel so pressured that I don't have any special talent. I didn't learn to play the piano or anything. Usually, someone has a special something. I just like boring things, like watching movies and reading books." Contrary to the flashy, fashion-forward frontier she frequents, Kelly doesn't like wearing makeup or getting dressed up all the time.

It's almost anathema to hear, considering she's lived part of the year in the world's shopping capital, but Kelly swears: "I'm so *kuripot* that I feel guilty when I go shopping." She's disarmingly candid about her quirks and foibles, especially her overpowering neat streak. "I can be neurotic, especially when I'm not working and I'm just home. I can't be idle. I panic," she says, explaining her tendency to arrange the items in her closet in the proper progression on colors. "I love cleaning. It's very therapeutic for me when I have problems."

She treasures the friends who loved her back before she gained incandescence. Kelly's perfectly happy talking about her boyfriend (sorry, boys), Carlos Fernandez, a computer specialist working for a gaming company. "He keeps me grounded," she says. She laughs easily, and enjoys laugh-out-loud movies such as those starring Jim Carrey or Will Ferrell. "I'm *mababaw* (easy to please) in the sense that I appreciate little things. I love all the freebies that I've been given, like the make-up they give."

Welcome experience

Now, she's making the next logical step. In January, Kelly makes her regular TV debut as a host of the new reality show on Studio 23, "Woman on Top." "When they offered it to me, I said, I should get into it, because it seems like I'm graduating from modeling. I pretty much did everything and it all came at the same time." It doesn't herald a full-blown invasion of showbiz, but it's a welcome experience. "I just did my first day of shooting, and it was so easy. It's both fun and 'what have I gotten myself into?'" Luckily, she's not shy at all in front of the camera; she is a natural, after all. Now she says she would like to get into more hosting. Though she is still undecided, Kelly will most likely return to HK later in 2006. Being in the spotlight means being busy for her, and she's content with that: "I'm excited and enjoying it, thinking 'Finally, this is my moment.' I was like, 'Bring on the work,' because I like work."

Despite the fact that she sees her face beaming back at her everywhere right now, Kelly remains very critical of herself. "I can't really be *yabang* (conceited) about it. I didn't really earn the way I look. If I won a Nobel Prize or an Oscar, I'd be *yabang* because I know I worked hard for that."

At the same time, she is savoring this moment as she is abundantly aware that white-hot fame for models passes; tastes change. "I know that there will be a next girl. I do expect it because it does happen. So I enjoy every day." Kelly Misa is immensely grateful it hasn't gone to her pretty head. "Modeling can change you. You expect more, more, more. I'm so glad I didn't become like that. I still have my family, friends and the things that make me happy."

This is, after all, a season where the trees sparkle and the stars shine brightest. Q

Workaholic wonder: "I can't be idle," says neatnik Kelly. "I panic!"

Music Makers

by Joy Rojas
photographs by Raffy Lerma

Music Is Politics, Religion, and Lights Up A Million Mornings

His Zambales arts center has brought out the mentor, administrator and tireless community advocate in him. But it's a concert with child prodigies that allows classical violinist Coke Bolipata to be what he truly is—a passionate performer

WHEN someone has listened to as much music as Alfonso "Coke" Bolipata has in all his 41 years, it's only natural to wonder what artist or genre is cued on his CD player at the moment. "Silence," says the celebrated classical violinist, practically savoring the word. "Silence is the best thing. And it's not even a kind of escapism. In a very Zen way, it's everything and nothing. And it's almost as if you can hear everything in the silence. For me, silence is the most revealing moment."

Which is not to say, of course, that Bolipata doesn't enjoy the sound of music—classical or otherwise—when he hears it. In fact, the thought of sharing the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo with his talented children's string ensemble, the Pundaquit Virtuosi, and the world-renowned Loboc Children's Choir on January 6 and 7, 2006, is, well, music to his ears for many reasons.

For one, the concert, called "Light A Million Mornings," is a fund-raiser benefiting the rehabilitation of 650 kids of the Tuloy Sa Don Bosco Streetchildren Village. "It's a great concept, kids helping other kids," says Bolipata of the show that also includes performances by Australian Pops Orchestra conductor Julian Quirit and Quirit's 19-year-old daughter, solo violinist Eliza. "And it's a privilege for the children of Pundaquit and Loboc, who have no income but are rich in talent, to raise money for children who are even more underprivileged than they are."

Prestigious stage

The opportunity to perform Mozart, Vivaldi and some Filipino classics on a prestigious stage was also an offer too good for this passionate violinist to pass up. Lamenting the lack of support and appreciation for classic music these days, Bolipata, who has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in major concert arenas around the world, including Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center, has of late found an audience in corporate gigs.

"Well, the pay's really good," he says, citing how an hour of violin-playing for a top jeweler's event fetches enough money to pay for a year's worth of electricity at CASA San Miguel, the arts center he established 13 years ago in the fishing village of San Antonio, Zambales.

As for the psychic rewards, that's a different story. "No, I haven't gotten to that point," he chuckles when asked if he's ever been approached for cheesy requests or had guests drop him tips in an oversized goblet. "But I've started to say no to corporate gigs."

Clearly, compromising classical music, even if it means attracting a wider market to survive, is not in this violinist's veins. "*Hay naku*," he lets out a long sigh then laughs at the mention of international artists like Maksim and Il Divo who give classical music a modern twist.

"I think it's the natural thing to take it to that direction. But in its purest form, it's really ancient music, archeological stuff! And our role is to keep it intact as a museum piece, to keep it in its purest form, in the spirit in which it was written. *Elitista pa rin*, (Still elitist)," he concludes with a grin. "Sorry."

Ironically, if classical music resonates with anybody, it's with the 125 scholars of Bolipata's CASA (Center for the Arts in San Antonio) San Miguel, of which the Pundaquit Virtuosi is a part. The scholars, all between the ages of 7 and 14, and many from the marginalized sectors of farmers and fisherfolk, have performed all over the Philippines and have reaped major awards in the National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA). "It has a universal truth," says Bolipata of classical music's ability to seduce the senses of classes across the board. "It'll teach you things that other things won't teach you. If politicians played classical music, there would be less corruption. For me, it's my religion, it's my politics, it's my everything."

The fourth in a family of three boys and a girl, Coke (a nickname coined by aunts from a word that best described him, *loko-loko* or crazy: Alfonso, Alfonsito, Locofino, Colofino, Coc, Coke) comes from a long lineage of artists. His maternal grandfather, Ramon Corpuz, was the first concert violinist of the Manila Symphony Orchestra. His sister Plet is an established painter. And his brothers, Jaime and Ramon, are a pianist and cellist respectively. "It seems to be in our consciousness, being rebellious and nontraditional," says Bolipata, who also cites a writer and poets in their brood. "We were predisposed to any kind of art because there was a lot of expression in the family."

Instrument of choice

Bolipata was 8 when he learned how to play the violin, an instrument he took up at random. Nevertheless, Bolipata, who trained under Oscar C. Yatco, was not only a quick study, he was a brilliant one, mastering in a day what others struggled and plodded through for months, even years. Although music came easy, practicing did not for the boy who endured as much as five to eight hours of violin playing a day. "My dad (who passed away recently from a heart attack) was a strict disciplinarian. For him, if you want to do something, you

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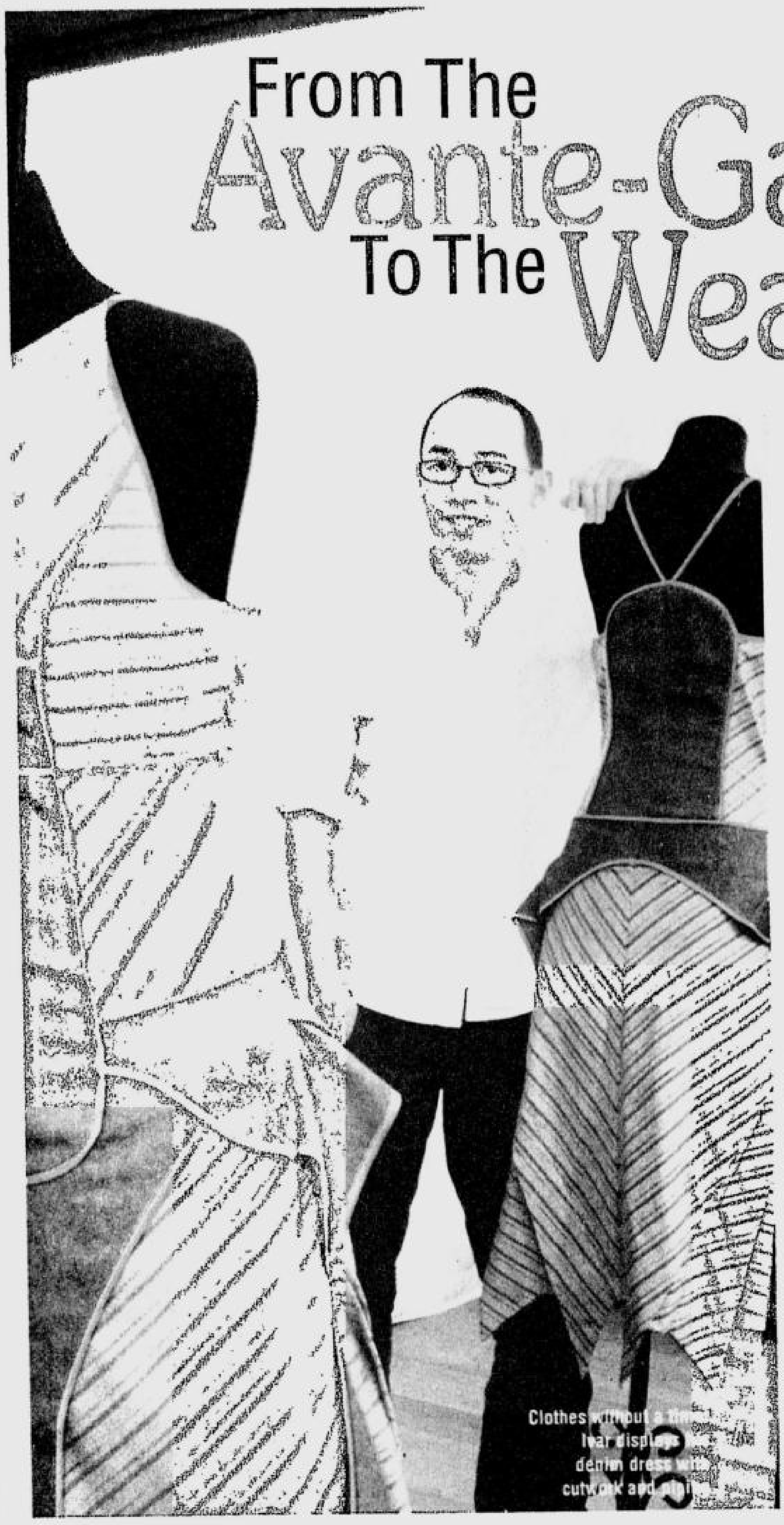
Stylewatch

by Blaise C. Gacoscos
photographs by Erwin Obcemea

From The Avante-Garde To The Wearable, Ivarl


Clothes without a ti
Ivar displays
denim dress wit
cutwork and pipi

ASHION designer Ivarluski Esmeralda Aseron, 35, is known for his structured style, experimental patterns and cutting-edge details. His bold entry to the 2002 Mega Young Designers Competition, for instance, consisted of separates, dresses and a gown—all in thick canvas, twisted rope and distressed and knotted gauze. "For me, it's an art work."

His collection was well-received but, says Ivar, hesitantly, "No one was ordering." He bursts into laughter. After his laugh lines disappear, he says with a serious mien: "Somehow it was also a lesson for me. I made clothes that weren't so wearable at the time. I just designed clothes to satisfy and challenge myself. I was probably too intense—I wanted to do a design even if people didn't wear it. But now I also see this as a business. It has to generate income in order to survive. I did tone down a bit. My design has evolved from avant-garde to wearable pieces."

Ivar's "early influences" were his mother Leonor and father Ildefonso. Both, says Ivar, were smart dressers during their time. He started doing fashion sketches in high school, but he had to keep his sketchbook away from his parents' eyes. "It was discouraged."

Like a sponge

After finishing high school, Ivar entered college and graduated with a degree in BS Nursing in 1992. He went to the US on vacation without taking the board exam. Upon his return, he decided to enroll in short courses in fashion.

He studied Fashion Design both at the Madonna School of Fashion and the Premiere Center for Fashion and Design, Inc. He went to the Golden Hands Fashion and Arts School, Inc. for its Pattern-making and Sewing classes. He attended Concept and Line Planning and Merchandising workshops conducted in Manila by the Fashion Institute of Technology.

"I finally decided to be a designer in 1998," Ivar says. He apprenticed under fashion designer Bobby Novenario, who brought him to fashion shows, introduced him to fellow designers and showed him how to deal with clients.

"I was like a sponge. I tried to absorb everything. It was a big help because I could not, during that time, design in front of someone. With Bobby, it was an everyday thing. So *nahasa ako*. (I was honed.) I got used to it. I thank him for accepting a neophyte like me." Ivar left Bobby one year later.

Linear designs

In 1999, a self-confident Ivar joined the Philippine Fashion Design Competition. His entry: a three-piece ensemble that consisted of a jacket, an inner top and a skirt made of hammered abaca. He airbrushed the detail and outlined it with leather strips.

Fashion designer Jesus Lloren, who "guided" Ivar in the pattern and construction of his design, says: "He knows what he wants. He has a vision of what the dress will look like. At the time, his designs were very linear—a lot of curves and straight lines. His designs are kinetic—there's movement. Even if it's just a plain dress, you can see movements because of the lines. Ivar is more confident and experimental with his designs now. It has to be

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Trailblazers

by Al S. Mendoza

Between Hard Hat & Soft Heart of Aurora Romero, The Earth Moved

Childhood tribulations gave this titan of construction the ability to make her dream projects come true

CONTRIBUTED PHO

1993: THE air is pregnant with tension as storm clouds rumble in the distance. Construction workers had been working to clear a channel through the lahar-ravaged Pampanga landscape as monsoon rains fall, causing massive flooding. Bulldozers and excavators are still trying to clear the tons of volcanic debris.

In the midst of what could be a chaotic scenario is Aurora Cruz Romero, who is a sight to behold in her transparent raincoat and hard hat, as she supervises the dredging with hand signals and a portable radio.

"OK," she says, watching the dark clouds in the distance, "*Wala na*. (That's it). Drop everything and get as many people out as we can." Dump trucks filled with construction workers rush to the adjoining barrios to help in the evacuation as the remaining bulldozers keep dredging to gain them a little more time.

Solemn vow

Hours later, the area is deserted as a yellow bulldozer disappears under the thick grey sludge and floodwaters and mud rush into the channel. Aurora had stayed behind as long as possible, making sure that the crew and townsfolk had reached relative safety.

Romero is no stranger to nature's wrath, having grown up on the banks of the Agno River in Pangasinan where she saw the devastation the river caused during the typhoon season.

She herself almost drowned when a flashflood engulfed Dorongan field, a mango grove she had played in as a child. She and her best friend Clara had been picking fruits one day when they were caught by a sudden downpour. Within minutes, the river had swelled and overflowed, engulfing Dorongan in its churning waters.

She was saved, a miracle that she attributes to Our Lady of Manaoag, but her friend was not so lucky. Clara disappeared under raging floodwaters and drowned. The young Aurora held a grief-stricken vigil by the river until her body was found. It was then that she made a solemn vow to do what she could to keep anyone from losing a loved one to floodwaters again.

Years later, she delivered on her promise, helping dredge a new river that diverted flood water away from the mango groves and fields of Dorongan. It is not something that she brags about, showing grace by giving credit where it is due and acknowledging that nothing would have been possible without her army of workers.

Watching the raging waters of the Agno River flow into the new channel instead of bringing devastation to the fields and barrios was one of the most fulfilling days of her life, says Romero, an affirmation that she can still change the world in her own way.

Half the sky

At 75, that's exactly what she is doing, proof once more of that oft-repeated quote attributed to Chairman Mao. As head of a construction firm with a triple A rating from the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board, she proves that indeed, women hold up half the sky.

This hardy woman is never afraid to get her hands dirty doing "a man's job." She's always on-site, once even having herself lowered to the bottom of a trench 30 feet deep, just to oversee the dredging of a canal that would redirect lahar from the fields and paddies of Central Luzon.

Not content with just managing the business, she has dabbled in many aspects of raising engineering marvels from barren swathes of earth, teaching herself to read architectural plans, engineering diagrams, and even the inner workings of her heavy machinery.

Despite not having formal training in architecture, this innovative builder was able to design and construct her own house, the impressive Bahay na Puti in Mangatarem, an American colonial mansion inspired by the White House in Washington, DC.

Like most stories of success, whether the subject is male or female, things did not come to a head overnight. Aurora's recognition as a master builder is a result of years of industry combined with a genuine love for people and her work.

Aurora credits her father, owner of a fleet of lumber trucks, for teaching her the basics of business. *Amang* Amado Cruz often spent the day at the sawmills, directing hundreds of workers as they cut logs into boards and planks. Aurora was never far behind of course, following her father like a second shadow.

Mutual respect

She remembers that he never embarrassed any of his employees, never called them names, or treated them like he was better than them. *Amang* Amado was so well-loved that he was always the guest of honor at weddings, baptisms and town fiestas, a duty and honor that he seldom turned down. "Treat people with respect, Auring,' he told her once, "and they'll give you re

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This nurse-turned-fashion maverick used to make bold, far-out clothes for his own satisfaction, until he learned to merge the art and business sides of his craft. Now, he's dressing Manila's creme de la creme

iski Aseron Has Found His Place

For the experimental: This beige and brown chiffon dress is Ivar's version of a ballerina's tutu

something hard to do or something you haven't seen before."

Ivar lost in the competition, but "it felt like winning" because the Young Designers Guild of the Philippines saw his potential and invited him to be a member of the guild. (Ivar is currently the vice president of YDG. He is also a member of the Fashion and Design Council of the Philippines.)

His designer-friend Dennis Lustico reveals that it was around this time that Ivar was "torn" between migrating to the US and pursuing his dream to be a full-fledged fashion designer. He chose to stay.

After two years, Ivar put up his shop in Quezon City. Following Dennis' advice, he moved to Makati, where most of the rich clientele is.

"During the early years of my career, *siyempre*, I didn't have many clients. I got frustrated, but I sprung back right away." There was also a problem with his sewers. "It's hard to train workers, because while some have attitude problems, others didn't get what I wanted and didn't share my vision. I can't say that my team today is perfect, but somehow they get what I want."

"We encounter these things during the early part of our career," Dennis agrees. "No client? That's expected. Problem with sewers? That's normal. Ivar got frustrated, but he never came to me to say he's closing his shop. He saw the promise."

Cutting edge: Kite-inspired silk dress with folds on the sleeves

Wowing audiences

These days, Ivar has more than enough clients to sustain a decent living. They include celebrities and socialites like Celine Lopez, Wendy Puyat-Hotung, Mons Romulo-Tantoco, Georgina Wilson, Boy Abunda, Raymond Gutierrez, Franco and Ayen Laurel, and only recently, Iza Calzado.

Ivar continues to wow audiences with his unbridled runway creations: a jersey collection with a tailored but fluid look during this year's Fashion Week; a wedding gown layered in fine *jusi* with a reverse halter top and black laced inlay detail at the Crowne for the Bride 2006 event; a kite-inspired silk dress in lime, beige and black with pleats on the sleeves at the Philippine Fashion Trends 2006. For our pictorial this afternoon, Ivar displays a striped denim dress with radical cutwork and orange and red piping, what he calls his "new creation."

Is this the latest fad? "My clothes are never trendy and I cannot say that they're advanced," says Ivarluski Aseron, smiling. "They cannot find their time."

Ivar's shop is located at 1240 Cardona Street, Rizal Village, Makati City, tel. no. 897-6989, cell phone no. 0927-2736583. He also supplies clothes to Fiber, located at Nullah Building along Jupiter Street, Makati City.

For comments and suggestions, please e-mail the author at blaisegacoscos@yahoo.com.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

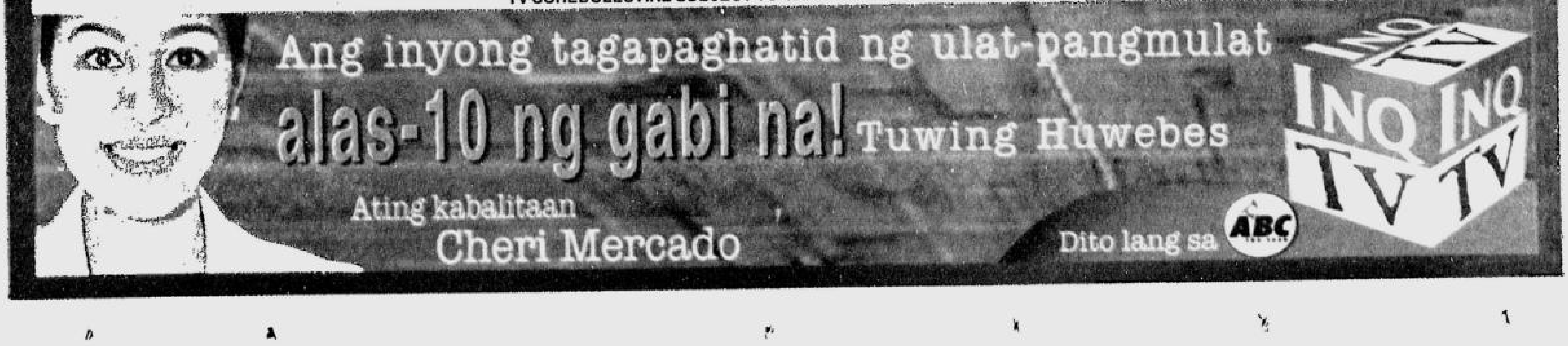
Sunday, December 18, 2005

Sayaw. Drama. Iba.
Shall We Dance? The Celebrity Dance Challenge
Sunday 9 PM
hosted by Lucy Torres Gomez
ABC Iba Tayo!

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC5		Ringside TV		PBA										Shall We Dance?		Pasko Sa Atin			
ABS-CBN2	A.S.A.P Fanatics		Pinoy Big Brother Buzz		The Buzz				Goin' Bulilit		Search For A Star In A Million	Rated K		TV Patrol World	Pinoy Big Brother	Sunday Family Cinema			
AXN		Alien Hunter				E Buzz	Mondo Magic	AXN Shakedown		Ultimate Guinness World Records	Ultimate Guinness World Records	Numb3rs (Season II)		CSI Crime Scene Investigation (Season 4)		CSI: NY (Season II)		CSI Miami (Season 3)	
Cartoon Network	X-Men Evolution	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Xiaolin Showdown	Tom & Jerry Show		CNAE Winner's Pick						Powerpuff Girls	Courage The Cowardly Dog	Dexter's Laboratory	Crush Gear Nitro	Power Rangers Ninja Storm	Superman The Animated Series	Harvey Birdman (11:15PM)	Mission Hill
Cinema One				Trip				Now That I Have You				Bahay Ni Lola 2				Kung Ako Na Lang Sana			
Cinemax		Scent Of A Woman					Groundhog Day (5:45 PM)				Nowhere To Run			Secret Window			Death Becomes Her (10:35PM)		
CNN	International Correspondents	World News	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	World News	Design 360	World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		World News	Talk Asia	World News	MainSail	World News	World Sport	Global Challenges	Business Traveller	Talk Asia	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart
Discovery Channel		Mostly True Stories		American Chopper		Ultimates		Mythbusters		Hour Asia		Cathay Pacific Signature Series		China's Man Made Marvels		FBI Files		Power Zone	
Disney Channel	Recess	Totally Spies	Lizzie McGuire	Brandy & Mr. Whiskers	Lilo & Stitch	Totally Spies	Mr. Bean	Phil Of The Future	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Mr Bean	America's Funniest Home Video	Phil Of The Future	Even Stevens	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Boxing Series Friday Night Fights				Atlantic Coast Conf Basketball Depaul vs W Forest				Atlantic Coast Conf Basketball [illegible] vs W Forest		Sportscenter Asia		Rewind 2005 Century 21 Home Run Derby				Pro Billiards '05 Men's Sudden Death 7-Ball	
ETC	Will & Grace	Saturday Night Live		Veronica Mars		American Dreams		One Tree Hill		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Average Joe		Rated Oh!	The Insider Weekend	Meet My Folks		ET Weekend	
EWTN	Pilgrimages To The Shrines Of Eastern Europe	Angelus (3:15 PM)	The Donut Man	Adventures In Odyssey	Deep Conversation: Deep Prayer	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Octavia Dias	Rome Reports	EWTN Bookmark	EWTN Global Showcase		Onward Pilgrims	Mirror Of The Soul	Sunday Mass (SAP) Live			Life Is Worth Living	The Abundant Life	
Fox News		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Fox Report Saturday		Heartland With John Kasich		Big Story Weekend Edition		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Fox & Friends Sunday						Fox News Live	
GMA7	Gigsters	Love To Love		S-Files				Mahiwagang Baul		Starstruck 3		Mel & Joey		All Star K		Daddy Di Do Du		Sunday Night Box Office	
Hallmark Channel	The Nanny II	The Temptations				The Temptations			Mitch Albom's 5 People You Meet In Heaven					Naughty Or Nice			Midsomer Murders: Electric Vendetta		
HBO	Raising Waylon			Mystic River					Global Effect (6:20 PM)			Paycheck				The Big Preview: King Kong	City Slickers II: The Legend Of Curly's Gold		
IBC13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop	Mr. Taxman	Home Shopping Network		Home Shopping Network		Japan Video Topics		Billiards		TBA		Iyo Ang Katarungan	EL SHADDAI		
JackTV		Reno 911	Blue Collar TV	X-Play	Sweat	Street Smart	The Sib Show	Hip Hop Nation	Ride With Funk Master Flex	WWE Afterburn		WWE Smackdown				South Park	The Man Show	Insomniac W/ Dave Attell	Beat The Geeks
Lifestyle Network	Date With Design	Ground Rules	Outer Spaces	Your Private Island	Breathing Room	Back To Basics	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Ciao America With Mario	Wolfgang Pucks Celebrates		Holiday W/ The Stars School Hard Rock		Head In The Clouds				Clean House	
MTV Philippines	Mush		Laguna Beach	MTV Cribs	Wade Robson Project	Viva La Bam	Pimp My Ride	Get Hitch'd	MTV Screen	The 70's House	Spring Break	MTV Presents				Whatever Things	MTV Hits	Essential VH1	
MYX		PinoyMYX Countdown				Take 5	MYX Bandanto	MYX News	Star MYX	MYXLOG	Pop MYX	MYX Presents		MYX Hit Chart				MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX
National Geographic		Amazing Moments		The Other Final		Science Of Football		Top 5		Wow!		About Asia / No Borders: Longest River		Nat Geographic Specials: Best Of The Week: Earth In Review		Treasure Fleet: The Adventures Of Zheng He			
NBN														Sun Games					
Nickelodeon	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Unfabulous	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	Drake & Josh	Zoey 101	Avatar: The Last Airbender	Danny Phantom	My Life As A Teenage Robot	1,2,3	As Told By Ginger - The Wedding Frame	Four Eyes	Zoey 101	Unfabulous	Girls In Love	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Four Eyes	The Wild Thornberrys	The Brothers Garcia
PBO			Sayo Ang Batas, Akin Ang Katarungan				Wooly Booly 1 (Ang Classmate Kong Alien)				Bitoma				Night Of The Champions				Masamang Damo
Qtv		Baywalk		Joan Of Arcadia		Ginang Fashionista		Ang Pinaka...		Pop Star Kids		May Trabaho Ka		Sunday Super Sine				MINT (Music Interactive)	
RPN9		Golf Power	Auto Extreme	Fistorama		JAG		JAG		Navy NCIS		Without A Trace		NBA On RPN				Sure Hits	The Working President
SBN21				Buhay Pinoy		Shepherd's Voice		Sony Bmg Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Kaluwalhatian		Gabay At Aksyon			
Solar Sports		WTA '05 Advanta Philadelphia SF 1				Denmark Open Men's Singles SF		GWS Ep 51-2005	NBA Jam	NBA Game Host @ Cavaliers					Sunday Slugfest Wright vs Soliman				
Sports Plus				Golf Hawaii 2004	Get A Grip On Golf	EMX Ep 02 Phoenix Show B		World Poker Tour ep 6 Connecticut				Racerworld		BD French Riviera	BD Peru	Wendy's Three-Tour Challenge Day 1			
Star Movies		Six Days Seven Nights			Cold Creek Manor (4:45 PM)				Hidalgo (6:45 PM)					The Alamo					The Sin Eater (11:20PM)
Star World		The Apprentice/ John Lennon, Working Class Hero		Tru Calling		Business Week Asia	Travel Asia	Smallville		The Simpsons	Kumars At 42	Oprah Prime Time		Koffee With Karan		The Robinsons/ The Nighty Night	Human Remains	The Simpsons	Oprah Prime Time
Studio23								Ngiiig		Y Speak		Joey	Living With Fran	Will & Grace		Dental Tour (10:15PM)	Chefs On The Go (10:45PM)		Buffy The Vampire Slayer

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.


Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat
alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV

Theater Tales

by Dennis M. Arroyo
photographs by Raffy Lerma

Onofre Pagsanghan's Dulaang Sibol at the Ateneo High School marks half a century of molding young men for the stage and for adult life. Three alumni, successful lawyers all, reminisce on being 'Sibolistas'

The world is their stage: Lopez, Bernardo and Hofileña ham it up in home-made costumes

On This Stage, Eagles Learn How To Love Life and Dare Fly Higher

PICTURE this courtroom scene where a witness takes the stand.

Witness: "*Pagkatapos ng krimen, naghiwahiwalay sila.*"

Translator: "After the crime, they sepa-separated."

That's the sort of remark that would tempt a judge to cite one for contempt of court. That's also the kind of cornball that would make its way into a high school skit.

Then again, even top legal eagles may share tacky dialogue lines if they knew they came from the same nest. Consider the lofty vista of three high-flying lawyers: Attorneys Tito Lopez, Jimmy Hofileña, and Peej Bernardo.

Carlos Roberto Lopez is a partner at SyCip, Salazar, Hernandez & Gatmaitan, the nation's largest law firm, while Jaime Hofileña is a partner at Poblador, Bautista & Reyes. Joining the latter in the same law firm is Pedro Jose Bernardo.

The three are alumni of Dulaang Sibol, the theater group of the Ateneo High School, now celebrating its 50th anniversary. The theater was founded by multi-awarded teacher Onofre Pagsanghan, known on campus as Mr. Pagsi. Many years ago, Hofileña played the leading man Narding in the classic "Sinta." Lopez was Brutus in Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar." Bernardo was shot almost daily when he played Jose Rizal.

The group began as the Ateneo High School Dramatics Society and presented Shakespearean plays. In 1966 it was renamed Dulaang Sibol, as it ventured into Pilipino productions. For example, Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" was transplanted into "*Doon Po Sa Amin.*" Critic Bien Lumbera called the troupe "a seminal force in the development of Philippine playwriting."

Powerful tool

Dulaang Sibol had been presenting plays in converted classrooms and borrowed halls until 1976, when the Ateneo gifted the cast with its own small theater of 156 seats. To celebrate its 50 years of an unbroken series of productions, the company is presenting six plays, the latest a restaging of "Adarna" based on the Filipino folktale, "*Ibong* Adarna."

Dulaang Sibol, says Pagsanghan, is really a means to an end: forming the man for others, the man of sacrifice and compassion. "The final thing really is formation," he says. " It is a very powerful tool for forming people."

The group taught its members to prioritize academics over theater work, such that in every generation, at least two-thirds of the group are honor students. The official passing grade to remain in Dulaang Sibol is 80 percent, but the real passing mark is to get at least an honorable mention. A great many members became Ateneo valedictorians and salutatorians, in line with the official thrust for the *magis*, the more, a passion for excellence.

This was exactly what defined the three hotshot barristers. Hofileña was honored with the Ateneo de Manila High School's top award, while Lopez got honors when he graduated from college at the University of the Philippines. Bernardo was the valedictorian of his Ateneo Law class in 2005. Lopez recalls that his Sibol batchmate, Jocot de Dios, former Energy Undersecretary, was the valedictorian of his Harvard Law class.

The academic life did not stop them from being athletes, as well. "During my time, we held rehearsals from 4 to 7 p.m., to allow the members enough time to engage in sports and varsity practice," recalls Lopez. For example, a batch ahead of him at the Dulaang Sibol had as member the captain of the Ateneo football team, as well as the captain of the track team.

"I tell the boys this is a microcosm of life," says Pagsanghan. "You do all of these things because God is preparing you for bigger things later on. As the Adidas ad says, impossible is nothing."

Indeed, the boys have learned to be very generous and forbearing in their efforts. Bernardo recalls that during one performance, actor Ali Figueroa broke his leg running down the aisle. Despite the severe pain, he continued to deliver his lines from the floor.

The latest production of "Adarna" captured the theme of self-sacrifice. Only the song of a magic bird can heal a dying king. Three sons search for Ibong Adarna, but only the youngest is selfless enough and willing to sacrifice beyond the point of pain. Only he slices his palm in a mess of blood to capture the bird.

True greatness

The three lawyers remembered that Dulaang Sibol was not assigned any janitors, as all members were expected to act like one. As the group's constitution put it, Sibolistas learned much about true greatness by cleaning the comfort room. Fr. Jose Fermin SJ, the current Headmaster of the Ateneo Grade School, specialized in scrubbing the toilet bowl during his Sibol days.

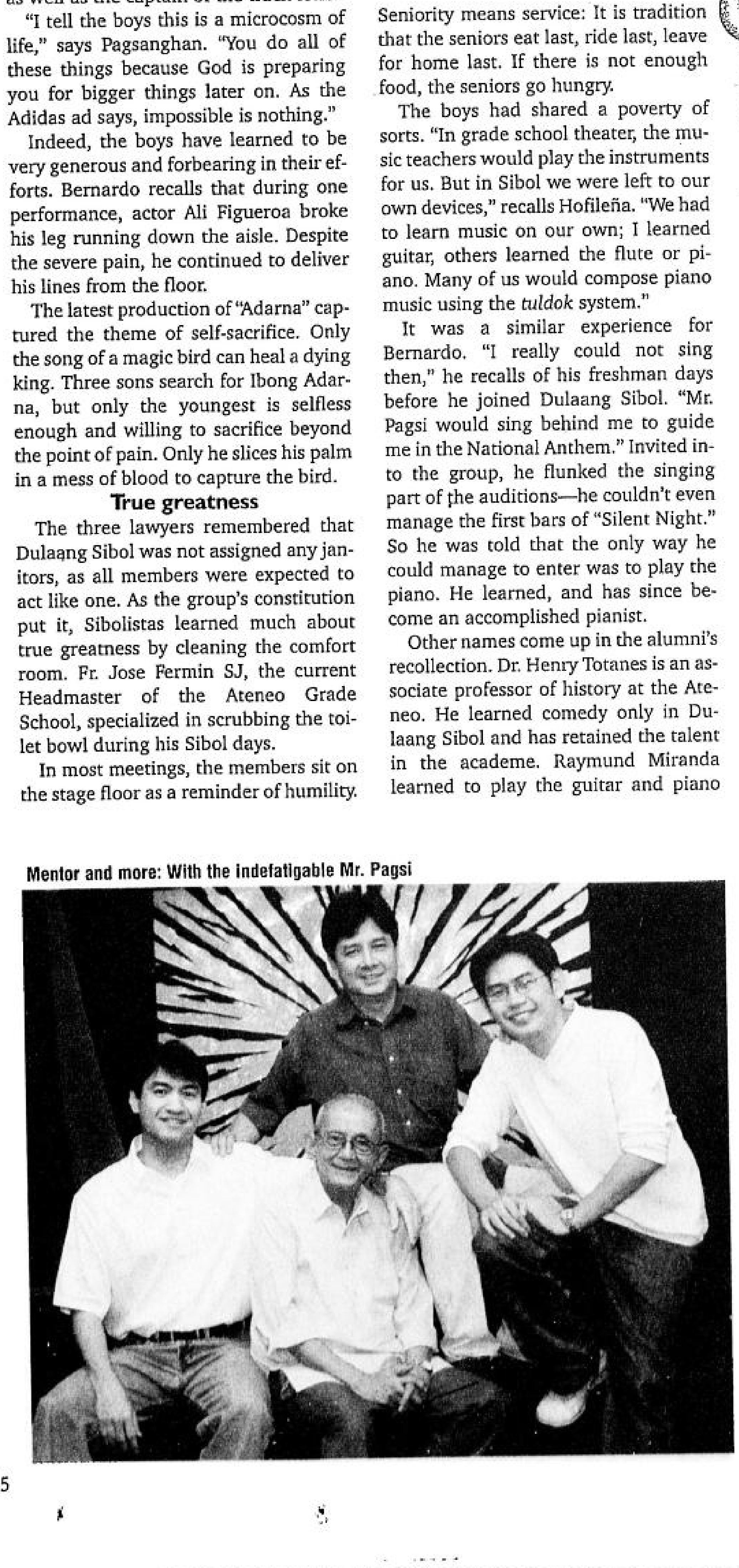
In most meetings, the members sit on the stage floor as a reminder of humility. Seniority means service: It is tradition that the seniors eat last, ride last, leave for home last. If there is not enough food, the seniors go hungry.

The boys had shared a poverty of sorts. "In grade school theater, the music teachers would play the instruments for us. But in Sibol we were left to our own devices," recalls Hofileña. "We had to learn music on our own; I learned guitar, others learned the flute or piano. Many of us would compose piano music using the *tuldok* system."

It was a similar experience for Bernardo. "I really could not sing then," he recalls of his freshman days before he joined Dulaang Sibol. "Mr. Pagsi would sing behind me to guide me in the National Anthem." Invited into the group, he flunked the singing part of the auditions—he couldn't even manage the first bars of "Silent Night." So he was told that the only way he could manage to enter was to play the piano. He learned, and has since become an accomplished pianist.

Other names come up in the alumni's recollection. Dr. Henry Totanes is an associate professor of history at the Ateneo. He learned comedy only in Dulaang Sibol and has retained the talent in the academe. Raymund Miranda learned to play the guitar and piano during his theater stint. The flair for music and the arts helps him today with his Singapore job as Managing Director of Walt Disney International.

Mentor and more: With the indefatigable Mr. Pagsi



Symbol of unity

The members sit in a circle as a symbol of unity in Christ, who is the center of life in Dulaang Sibol. The actors perform not only before the audience but also before a stylized crucifix designed by another alumnus, Fr. Manoling Francisco SJ, the composer of a vast array of religious songs.

"Because of Sibol, you end up going to Mass everyday, not because you have to but because you want to," says Bernardo. There is much prayer in the community, which makes time for reflection and sharing sessions.

The Dulaang Sibol experience has nurtured deep friendships among the members and alumni. It was meant to be so. "I dream of a gathering of friends where, because of mutual support, each can spread his wings and fly farther than each has ever dared to fly before," wrote Pagsanghan to the members back in 1976. It was his vision for the group, his preamble.

"We spent so much time together in many projects, we spent time together in prayer and sharing," recalls Hofileña. "Part of my memories is our walk-talk to gate 3." The campus is beautiful in the evening after the day's work is done. Taking the long stroll from the theater to the gate has built many friendships.

For his part, Lopez cherishes the summer workshops where the boys were trained in theater, presented their own plays, and made music. "The nice thing about it is that you are allowed to make mistakes, and you're encouraged and cheered on by the others," he says.

The Dulaang Sibol alumni have acquired an upbeat outlook on life. "You're taught how to love life in Sibol. By helping others, that's when you become happy. You get the spirit of optimism, of can-do here," adds Lopez.

Shakespeare was the consummate theater man and was quoted as saying, "The play is the thing." For Onofre Pagsanghan, the play is not the most important thing—the person is.

This Week

Art

Still Life: A Celebration, a four-person group show by active members of the Makati Artists' Guild Mel Cabriana, Peter Sutcliffe, Manuel Tuason and Molly Yap, until Dec. 21 at Gallery Genesis, 4/L, SM Megamall A. For preview, call 633-8137 to 38.

Karambola, a show of recent works in various media by the father and son tandem of Renato and Guerrero Habulan at the Big & Small Art Co., 4/L, Artwalk, SM Megamall A until Dec. 21.

Big & Small Art Co. presents a visual concerto of violins at the SM Megamall Art Center from Dec. 23 to Jan. 5. Entitled **Art on Violin Exhibit**, the show features 135 violins transformed into artworks by about 80 contemporary artists.

Briccio Santos presents small abstract works rendered in acrylic on paper in **Marginals**, the artist's latest one-man exhibition at Mag:net Gallery Paseo, Makati City, until Jan. 3.

The Artists Guild of Santa Maria, a group of young artists from Sta. Maria, Bulacan, holds its first exhibit outside their hometown, *Unang Pasko ng Agos*, at the CCP Pasilyo Guillermo Tolentino and Pasilyo Vicente Manansala until Jan. 8.

Reflections, Soler's solo exhibit of water imagery which he based on photographs, until Dec. 31 at Finale Art Gallery, 4/L, SM Megamall A.

3X, a group show of abstract patterns by Pablo Biglang-awa, Alfred Cruz and Jucar Raquepo at The Mag:net at The Loop, ELJ Comm, Center, ABS-CBN Compound Eugenio Lopez Jr., St., Quezon City until Dec. 31. For details, call 410-0995.

Moving Mountains, Edwin Wilwayco's solo exhibit of sublime abstract paintings, at the Galleria Duemila 4/F, SM Megamall A until Jan. 3.

Silence, a photo exhibit by Belgian photographer Frank Hoefsmit showcasing his recent abstract photographs of everyday scenes—trees, lampposts, clouds, and even scaffoldings—captured under ethereal light, until Dec. 31 DPI Center, 2/F Astoria Plaza, J. Escriva Drive, Pasig City. For details, call 633-6095.

Food

The great **Anghang Lunch Buffet** is back. From Onday to Friday, savor an ever changing menu of your favorite Asian Cuisine spiced up the Anghang way. It's a different taste everyday with choice of two kinds of soups and noodles, four appetizers, two vegetarian platters, three varieties of salads, six main courses, carvery and five dessert creations. For every party of five, one dines for for free. Visit Anghang at 1900 M. Adriatico, Malate, Manila or call 522-0403.

Makati Shangri-La offers exquisite **holiday hampers** at Sinfully Circles. Gourmet offerings such as an assortment of cookies and gingerbread treats, taro chips paired with a jar of rich mango salsa, honey-baked ham and classic Stonehaven Merlot Wine and traditional holiday cakes and breads like German Stollen or the Italian panatone with fruit and icing. For inquiries, call 813-8888 loc. 7463.

Italianni's Restaurant offers the **Pastry Package** which include mini cheesecake, tea ring, Hungarian bread and cinnamon supreme; the Christmas Bag which has tuscan and foccacia bread, herb oil and balsamic vinegar plus an option to include wine, and the Christmas Bread Box which comes with an assortment of sweet ham and cheese rolls, among others. Place your orders at Italianni's branches in Greenbelt 2, Glorietta 4, Alabang Town Center, SM City Bicutan, Greenhills, Gateway Mall, Tomas Morato, Eastwood Libis and SM Megamall.

Surprise family and friends with **luscious treats from the Richmonde Hotel's Lobby Café**. The delectable items available are traditional holiday fruit cake, cookie variations like chunky white, dark & white choco and combination chunky & choco, sweet pastries like chocolate & nut fudge squares, choco chips cheesecake and choco caramel cake, banana walnut loaf and homemade chocolate lollipops, all gaily packed in holiday boxes. For orders, call 638-7777 ext. 3732.

Atbp

The British Council invites Philippine residents to join **iKnow UK**, an online quiz about the United Kingdom which will run until February 2006. The online promotions aims to expose the young people to what UK has to offer in terms of education, the arts, culture and sports. Web visitors who join the quiz earn one raffle entry per completed quiz. They can earn as many raffle entries as they like. The raffle draw winner will receive a brand new iPod Nano. For inquiries, log on to www.britishcouncil.org.ph or call 914-1011 to 14.

Celebrate and relive the spirit of the Yuletide Season with **dawn Masses** from Dec. 18-24 (5 a.m.) and Dec. 24 (9 p.m.) at the Folk Arts Theater grounds of the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Highlights for the 9 p.m. Mass sponsored by the CCP and the CCP Complex Employees Organization and Amazing Theater Philippines on Dec. 24 are performances by the CCP's resident companies. For details, call 832-1125 loc. 1412/1413.

The **World Pyro Olympics** will bring the world's best in pyrotechnics to Philippine shores as teams from countries such as the USA, Russia, China, and the United Arab Emirates will set up over 8,000 shells on barges 300 feet from the breakwater of the Esplanade in Pasay City on Dec. 26-30. They will compete for the industry-wide prestigious honor of being the Champion of the World Pyro Olympics. The event will be introducing the new developments in pyrotechnic technology to the country. For details, call the WPO Information Center at 817-3073 or visit the website at www.worldpyroolympics.com.

X-manila

Public lecture and book launch of Bro. Karl Gaspar's study, "Mystic Wanderers in the Land of Perpetual Departures" on Dec. 20, 2:30 p.m. at the Redemptorists' Monastery Hall, Brgy. San Miguel, Iligan City and on Dec. 22, 3 p.m. at the Redemptorists' Monastery Garden, Bajada, Davao City. For inquiries, call 063-2215701 (Iligan); 082-2276647 (Davao) or 02-7279772 (Manila) or email spirit@tri-isys.com.

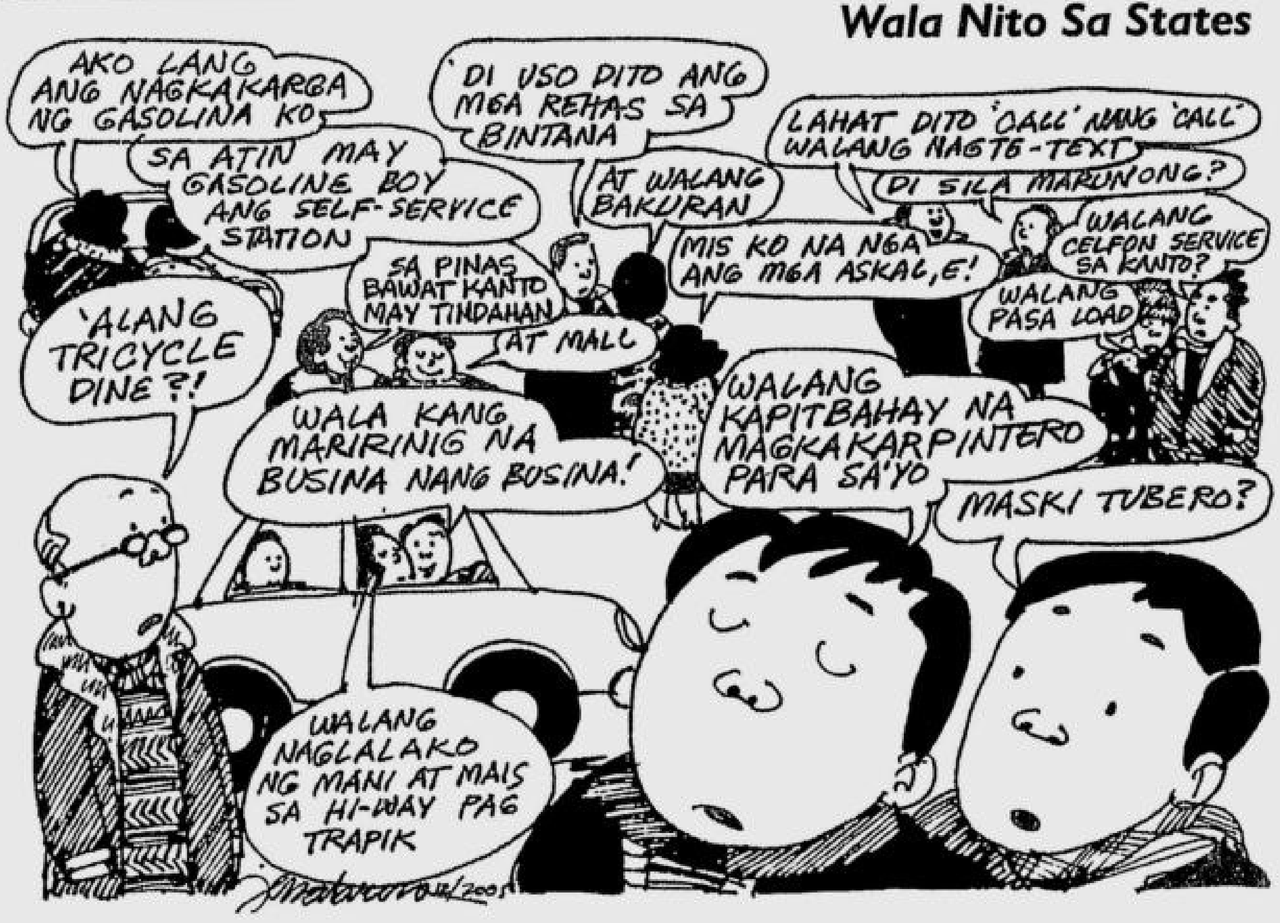
For this week's bands and schedules call:

- Hard Rock Café (893-4662-65)
- Virgin Café : QC (926-7982)
- '70s Bistro: 46 Anonas St., QC (922-0492)
- Hobbit House: 1801 Mabini St., Malate, Manila (521-7604)
- Strumm's: El Pueblo, Ortigas (637-3009)

The SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE welcomes listings of events in and outside Metro Manila. Please send announcements at least two weeks in advance, and include contact numbers for inquiries on schedules

Pinoy Nga!

Wala Nito Sa States


AKO LANG ANG NAGKAKARGA NG GASOLINA KO
SA ATIN MAY GASOLINE BOY ANG SELF-SERVICE STATION
'DI USO DITO ANG MGA REHAS SA BINTANA
AT WALANG BAKURAN
LAHAT DITO 'CALL' NANG 'CALL' WALANG NAGTE-TEXT
DI SILA MARUNONG?
SA PINAS BAWAT KANTO MAY TINDAHAN
AT MALL
MIS KO NA NGA ANG MGA ASKAL, E!
WALANG CELFON SERVICE SA KANTO?
WALANG PASA LOAD
'ALANG TRICYCLE DINE?!
WALA KANG MARIRINIG NA BUSINA NANG BUSINA!
WALANG KAPITBAHAY NA MAGKAKARPINTERO PARA SA'YO
MASKI TUBERO?
WALANG NAGLALAKO NG MANI AT MAIS SA HI-WAY PAG TRAPIK
2005

Classical ...from page 3

have to do it really well."

At 15, Bolipata quit music and set his sights on a business degree at the Ateneo. This news prompted then First Lady and Patroness of the Arts Imelda Marcos to invite him over to Malacañang. When Bolipata arrived, he was met by Mrs. Marcos and another guest, the concert pianist Van Cliburn. "So she asked me and Van Cliburn to play music. Then she served us McDonald's on a long table that was underneath a large chandelier." The surreal scenario ended with the First Lady and Van Cliburn successfully convincing the boy to stick with the violin. Three weeks later, Bolipata was en route to the Julliard School of Music.

Dramatic moments

Based in New York from the '80s to the beginning of the '90s, Coke and his equally talented brothers would make a name for themselves around Europe and the US as the Bolipata Trio. This was a time of great fame—and surprisingly, friction—for the siblings who pretty much lived out of suitcases. "I guess part of it was cabin fever. You're together all the time in the same hotel room. *Nagkakainitan din*," admits Bolipata. "We've had some really dramatic moments when one brother wanted to fly back to New York. We were in Europe at one point and we were fighting two hours before a performance." Creative differences, he says, were not the source of the squabbles which escalated towards the end of their decade-long career; little things were. "That's why a string quartet is the most difficult relationship—and all the more if the musicians are brothers or siblings, each with a past they can't get away from," he says. If memory serves him right, the trio's last performance was in CASA in 1996, "but even that was spur of the moment. Prior to that, we hadn't performed together since 1989." Plans to play at their father's funeral fell through when one brother refused. "We get together for the holidays and it's still a very loving family," assures Bolipata. "But that's just one of our idiosyncrasies and it happens to the best of families. It's only when we perform that it becomes a battle ground."

Ideal venue

As the trio slowly disintegrated, Coke pursued his own interests, playing with a piano trio and string quartet he had set up with other musicians. In 1990, a residency grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington sparked the inspiration for CASA San Miguel. Tasked to take culture to the countryside of America, Bolipata alternated playing in the cornfields and the concert halls of the US, and squeezed in trips to the family's peaceful mango tree-filled · property in Zambales. Thinking it an ideal venue for musicians, he took over the property in 1993, replacing the house which his grandfather built (but which had burned down in 1988) with a structure that included a stage. At first, the venue served as a place for a posh cultural festival; international artists found their way to the sleepy Zambales fishing village, and Embassy VIPs arrived via helicopter. Two years later Bolipata steered CASA to the community-based arts center that it is today.

"Community" is the operative word of CASA, which, in its latest incarnation, boasts subsidy for its scholars through pledges from Citibank New York and a creative complex courtesy of Siemens. There are also visual artists among the students, as well as kids from other provinces and more privileged backgrounds. Its main objective, however, remains the same. "Of course, it would be nice to win, but that's not a measurement of success and we're not going to be about creating that kind of excellence," says Bolipata, whose wards placed second and third in the recently concluded NAMCYA. "When a child opens up to an idea, that's already success for the day. But it's a challenge. We work so hard to get them to be good, and if they still don't win, it's our duty to tell them that they still 'won' by standing up for themselves, their family and the audience. You don't play music to win a competition," he declares, "you do it because it makes you feel good about yourself and you get to play with other kids."

Hopeless romantics

Indeed, playing music for music's sake explains why Bolipata still has his eye on international offers. "Performing is the best thing!" says the violinist, who is seriously considering a spot in a German string quartet, and is currently setting up CASA to the point that it becomes self-sufficient soon. Before that happens, he's scheduled to appear in a concert—a real concert!—with the Metro Manila Community Orchestra at the CCP's main theater in February 2006. Curiously, his repertoire (a "painful, angular and sad" work by Bartok) is hardly what hopeless romantics want to hear on Valentine's month. But Coke is doing it, no matter what. "We can't be like this forever," he says of favoring more popular and pleasing-to-the-ear artists over obscure ones. "I'll die if it's going to be like that."

Simple pleasures occupy the periods when Bolipata isn't scouting around for sponsors (or what he wryly calls "begging professionally") for CASA San Miguel. In Manila, he likes watching movies; planting trees, like the ones outside CASA's gate, is his pastime in Zambales.

Violin practice, now down to three to four hours ("Maintenance *na lang ako*," he says with a smile), is still part of his daily routine, and this time, Bolipata has come to appreciate the beauty behind it. "The satisfaction comes whether you're playing music by yourself in your room, or practicing with a group of people," he says. "It's like reading a good book by yourself or when you're sharing a good book with others. The satisfaction is very intimate." Q

For tickets to Light A Million Mornings, please visit all Hen Lin food outlets and Sarabia Optical stores, or call the CCP at 832-1125. You can also call or text (0906) 257-3079.

The Hard ...from page 4

Young couple: With her husband, the late Judge Dante Romero

spect right back."

Amang Amado performed maintenance on the heavy-equipment ma chinery himself. On Sundays, the young Aurora would be his assistant, handing him the tools and parts that he needed. It was this tradition between father and daughter that sparked in Aurora a fascination for how tools and machines worked. This fascination led her into construction and a life-long appreciation for machinery. "I just love how things fit together," she says, "like when everything just clicks and the engine starts. It's a puzzle. And when you figure it out, that's joy."

Later, during the Japanese occupation, life was not easy for the young Aurora. Times were hard and what little they had they shared among the large family; often, dinner was just boiled *camote* and a pinch of salt.

Daunting tasks

To earn extra money for the family, she and her sisters would cook *bibingka* and pick mangoes from the fields to sell. "They were the sweetest mangoes in the province," she recalls. "That's where the town got the name of Mangatarem: for the sweet mangoes."

Later, they would volunteer to carry sacks of rice harvested from the paddies for drying and husking. Family lore has it that she earned her first million that way: carrying cavans of rice on her back, heavier than her 16-year-old self.

Even after her marriage to lawyer Dante Romero, Aurora tackled the equally daunting tasks of running a business in a male-dominated industry and raising a family. She was a feminist before the term came into vogue, a proponent for women empowerment without even realizing it.

Aurora's industry and willingness to get her hands dirty is still apparent as she personally supervises the intricate ballet of almost a hundred heavy construction equipment. "Moving earth energizes me," says this lady builder. "It's so primal because you harness nature, you shape it. If you can help move the earth to make people's lives better, then it becomes a calling."

But the woman, who has built impressive structures, considers her children her most ambitious and important projects. Growing up in her Bahay na Puti, they fondly remember the thousands of framed photographs and memorabilia that their mother has kept, imparting to them the lessons that each had to offer.

Enduring monuments

Through her hard work, Aurora was able to send them to the best schools, and watched them become lawyers, business executives and artists. She considers them the enduring monuments of her life, not the steel bridges, airports, mega-dikes, dams, highways and rivers that she hardly ever mentions now.

While some people might say that the construction site is no place for a woman, especially an old lady, Aurora proves that no matter what her work is, she can retain her regal bearing and dignified mien. This *lola* feels at home in the drawing rooms and tea parties of the rich and famous as she is in muddy construction sites. She has rubbed shoulders with foremen and first ladies, held hands in prayer with Mother Teresa, and was with Hillary Clinton in NewYork when the former first lady released her autobiography. She likes to say that "everyone has a story to tell, a lesson to teach, a little bit of God inside them, if you will."

Her childhood experiences of living along the river and years in the construction business have made her a passionate environmentalist, who recognizes that logging contributes to the flooding that plagues the country every year. Reforestation has become an advocacy, and she's had a hand in re-planting the countryside with mahogany and mango trees.

Ever industrious, Aurora has already begun planning her dream project: building a bridge across the new river to make it easier for the townsfolk to cross.

So far, the bridge is yet a frail silhouette of iron bars and wooden scaffoldings in the weak light. But like sequoia seedlings or stumps of coral polyps, it is biding its time and hinting at an inevitable massiveness.

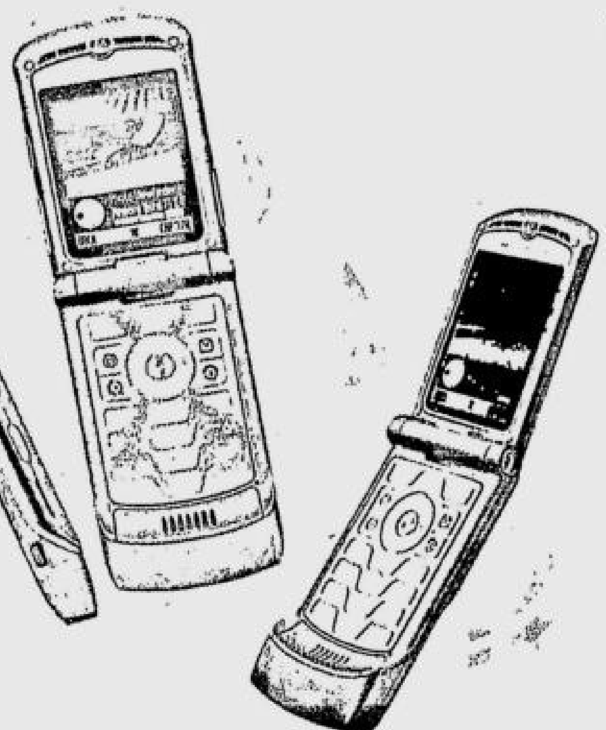
"Let's get to work," Aurora says. "Let's see how this dream puzzle will unravel." Q

HOLLYWOOD

TRENDSETTERS

SPORT NEW HOT

PINK RAZR

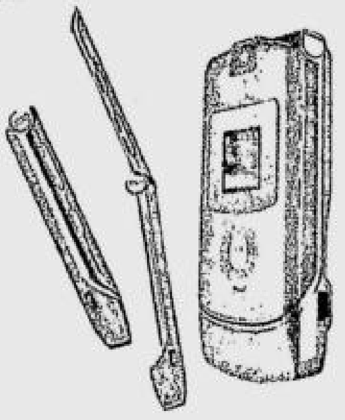


PINK IS THE NEW RAZR

It's the intrigue of the year: hot Hollywood "it" girls, which include Maria Sharapova, Hillary Duff, Jessica Simpson, Paris Hilton, Nicole Richie, Denise Richards, and Gwen Stefani have been spotted sporting the new and oh-so-cute Hot Pink RAZR. These enviable elite have been toting the Pink RAZR absolutely everywhere, inexorably becoming the talk of tinseltown and beyond.

Only a handset as quirky and adorable as the Pink RAZR can do the job. With the sleek sophistication of the classic Motorola RAZR now coated in a bold, brilliant hot new shade of rose, it practically screams, "Look at me!" It's the ultimate celebrity status symbol, trendy accessory and fashion statement.

But let's not forget the best part: Motorola technology is powering this little baby, putting the heart of cutting-edge design and innovation into the palm of your hand, or rather, the back pocket of your too-tight-for-words As Seven jeans. Nothing can get any better than that. Girls, mavens, princesses, and fashionistas alike are falling completely in love with this phone!



MARIA SHARAPOVA

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